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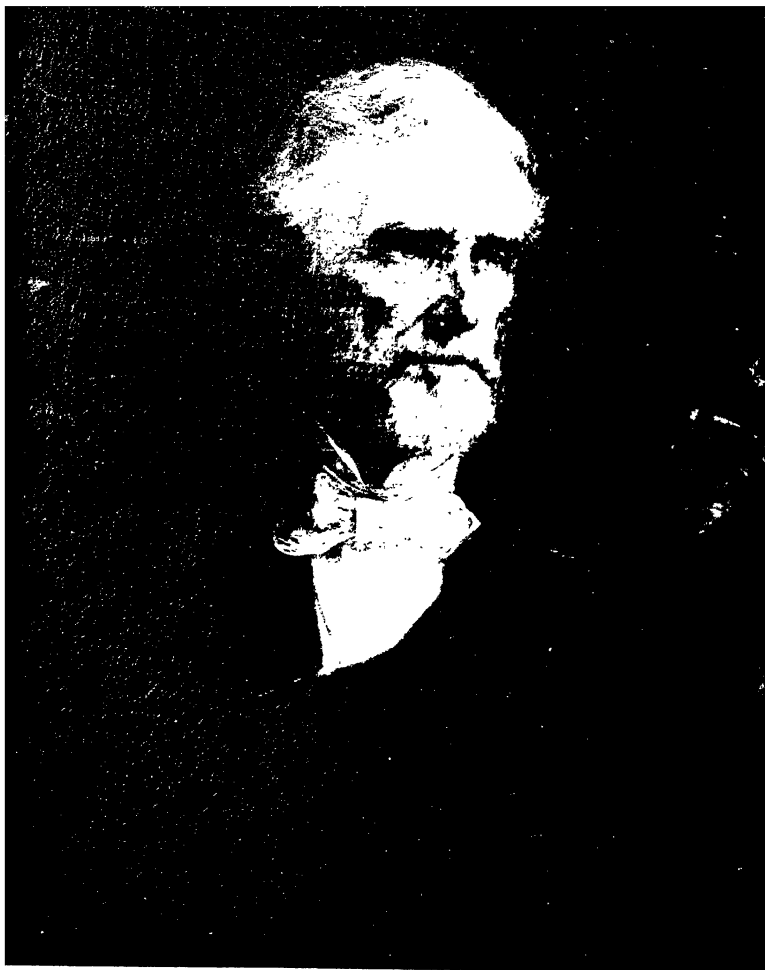
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JEFFERSON DAVIS
POLITICAL SOLDIER



JEFFERSON DAVIS
From the portrait in the War Department

JEFFERSON DAVIS POLITICAL SOLDIER

by
ELISABETH CUTTING

—•—
ILLUSTRATED
—•—



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To
G. C. R.

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FOREWORD

A BOY of eight, shy, sensitive, over-serious for his years, for he had lived them in the tumult of a great war, who, in the years to come, was destined to be part of an even greater, stood with his family in the hushed stillness of the main street of a fine old Southern city and witnessed a grim sight. The President of the Confederate States of America, Jefferson Davis, a captive, under guard of Federal soldiers, was passing through Augusta.

What impression the child had of this grave incident his most recent biographer fails to tell us. But some forty years later, in his maturity, writing as an acknowledged political scientist of the first rank, as well as a lover of the South, considered study of Jefferson Davis and his Presidency led him to estimate the man in this wise:

“Not a little of the dogged perseverance and undaunted action of those closing months of the struggle had been due to the masterful characteristics of Mr. Jefferson Davis, the President of the Confederacy. He had served a distinguished apprenticeship in arms in the Mexican War, a still more distinguished apprenticeship in affairs in the Cabinet and in the Senate of the United States. He had the pride, the spirit of initiative, the capacity in business, which qualify men for leadership, and lacked nothing of indomitable will and imperious purpose to make his leadership effective. What he did lack was wisdom in dealing with men, willingness to take the judgment of others in critical matters of business, the instinct which recognizes ability in others and trusts it to the

utmost to play its independent part. He too much loved to rule, had too overweening a confidence in himself, and took leave to act as if he understood much better than those did who were in actual command what should be done in the field. He let prejudice and his own willful judgment dictate to him the removal of Joseph E. Johnston from the command at Atlanta, the only man who could have made Sherman's march to the sea impossible. He sought to control too many things with too feminine a jealousy of any rivalry in authority. But his spirit was the life of the Government. His too frequent mistakes were the result as much of the critical perplexities of an impossible task as of weakness of character. He moved direct, undaunted by any peril, and heartened a whole people to hold steadfast to the end."¹

The boy, and the author, was Woodrow Wilson.

¹ Woodrow Wilson, *A History of the American People*, Vol. IV, pp. 310, 311.

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JEFFERSON DAVIS
POLITICAL SOLDIER

Chapter I

"The New Republic"

A LETTER had arrived at the French Foreign Office for His Excellency, M. Thouvenel, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the blue circle surrounding the date, February 28, indicated the time of its receipt. It was from M. Mercier, the French Minister at Washington, written February 11, 1861, and it so chanced that it was the postscript that carried the matter of importance.¹ The telegraph, he writes, had just brought the news that Mr. Jefferson Davis had been chosen President of the Southern Confederacy, and Mr. Stephens Vice-President. This choice of Mr. Davis, M. Mercier tells His Excellency, supports fully all that he had said of the firm resolution of the seceding States to persevere in their course. There was annexed to the communication a newspaper clipping with the date line of Montgomery, Alabama, and from it could be learned that the Provisional Constitution as adopted by the new Confederacy of the South differed but slightly from that of the United States.

The Quai D'Orsay had now before it some rather confusing material in regard to matters in America. The seceding States had met in Montgomery and formed a Confederacy, adopted a provisional Constitution and chosen a President, while Abraham Lincoln, duly elected the November before, was to be inaugurated as President of the United States just five days after M. Thouvenel had received M. Mercier's letter. How would France meet this phenomenon across the sea?

Another letter written a few days later by M. Mercier

amplified the brief postscript. He now informed the French Foreign Office in more detail about this newly elected President of the Confederacy. He was a man not unknown and inexperienced as was Mr. Lincoln. Quite the contrary, he was "*un veritable homme d'Etat*," with a record such as would inspire just confidence. Mr. Davis had begun his military career in a brilliant manner. He had won distinction in the War with Mexico, and as an administrator of the office of Secretary of War under President Pierce he had shown himself to be most able. In the Senate he had pleased when pitted against the most skilled and the most eloquent of the orators. In sum, his character was one of uncommon firmness joined to a personality at once gentle and distinguished. M. Mercier had given his Foreign Office a very agreeable portrait of the man who for four years was never quite to abandon the hope that France would recognize as an independent Government the political group that had chosen him to represent them as their President.

As a matter of course, the French Foreign Office had been fully advised of matters in the United States through this fateful winter of 1860 and '61; the seizure of the Federal forts by the State troops, the military preparations at Charleston, the departure of the Commissioners from South Carolina, their mission at Washington a complete failure, and so on. Each of these facts M. Mercier informs duly His Excellency, M. Thouvenel. He tells him further that in general all the news from the South indicates the progress of the movement towards secession.² The Quai D'Orsay was thus prepared for the news in the dispatch of February 11, 1861.

The complexities of European affairs at the moment were engaging the French Emperor's attention, but the word

America had a distinct fascination for him. He could have recalled that scarcely more than a dozen years before, upon France becoming again a republic, the American Minister, Richard Rush, had been the first representative of a foreign Government to convey congratulations to the new Government; and that this action though taken against the advice of the British Ambassador, met the "full and unqualified approbation" of his President, James K. Polk.³

His interest in America was, in part, because he felt himself possessed of a real knowledge of it. He was in the unique position of being a ruling European monarch who had actually seen America. Quite easily this dispatch to his Foreign Office would have been arresting. There had been that talk back in 1857 with Disraeli concerning Mexico. Mexico! But that was to come later. At the moment it would be necessary to wait and see what England would do, for France would not act alone. There was too that recently consummated Commercial Treaty with Great Britain which Cobden had achieved and which, most agreeably, had averted a war with England, but which, the Emperor was fully aware, had not been altogether acceptable to his subjects. Therefore, he could with wisdom wait to see how England would deal with these confused conditions in America. And it was because of this, that France would not act alone, that Jefferson Davis never heard the magic word recognition which, had it come, might have changed the ending to the story of the Confederacy.

Across the Channel in Downing Street, Lord John Russell learned from Lord Lyons' dispatch from the British Legation at Washington what the six seceding States assembled in convention at Montgomery had accomplished. Mr. Davis

and Mr. Stephens were elected heads, so he wrote, of "the new republic."⁴ He told Lord John Russell it seemed to be universally thought that the choice could not have fallen upon two more able men. The hope had been entertained that Mr. Davis might be disposed to enter into negotiation with the United States looking towards a reconstruction of the old Union, but the telegraphic report of a speech Mr. Davis made on his arrival at Montgomery certainly lessened that. If reported correctly, he thought the speech "far from moderate or indeed sensible." But to give Lord John Russell its tone he copied with meticulous care an abstract from it. "The time for compromise is now passed, and the South is determined to maintain her position, and make all who oppose her smell Southern powder and feel Southern steel. Our separation from the old Union is now complete. No compromise, no reconstruction is now to be entertained." It was what, as time went on, was to be known as Jefferson Davis' *credo*. Four years of war did not change his view, nor the years that wore on to the end of his life. But Lord John Russell did not know that. He only knew that, according to Her Majesty's representative, there had been created a "new republic" within the United States because six States had seceded from the Union, with a duly elected Executive, and he had now to set about thinking how Government would deal with so involved a situation. He was shortly to be enlightened further about Mr. Davis' speeches.

Ten days later the British Consul at Charleston, Robert Bunch, took pains to forward to Lord John Russell two copies of President Davis' Inaugural speech at Montgomery which, he said, with "the general moderation of its tone, has given great pleasure to the better classes of the community, who had looked for more violent language and sentiments from

a person of Mr. Davis' impulsive character and advanced doctrines."⁵

Since Lincoln's election in November, Lord Lyons had been keeping the Foreign Office well informed of the slowly rising tide of secession which was at the full when he sent his report of the election of Mr. Davis at Montgomery. Less than a month before the receipt of this dispatch Lord John Russell had written Lord Lyons that doubtless "the break-up of the Union was inevitable,"⁶ following upon South Carolina's secession, and he hoped that force would not be used. Now the break-up had come. When would force be necessary? And in that event what would be England's attitude?

The decision was reached six weeks later when Abraham Lincoln issued the call for seventy-five thousand troops and Jefferson Davis in proclamation invited applications for Letters of Marque, to be followed by Lincoln's reply with the Declaration of the Blockade. A Maritime War was in the making and England would police her commerce. During this interval English opinion was engaged in the difficult task of changing from its belief in the rightness of the Northern position, which harmonized with its own view in regard to slavery, to the undoubted importance of making the sea safe for cotton.

So the question that had been raised upon the arrival of Lord Lyons' dispatch telling of "the new republic," was answered in the Queen's Proclamation of Neutrality of May 13, in which it was asserted "certain States styling themselves the Confederate States of America" were to be regarded as belligerents, and Jefferson Davis was to have an early disappointment in that these States had failed of recognition as an independent nation by England. But this Proclamation,

as well as the one issued by the Emperor a month later, was perhaps the main reason why after four years, in spite of varying conspicuous departures from their intent, recognition never came from either England or France. Had not the Atlantic cable been stilled after its effort to carry the burden of the felicitations exchanged between the Queen and President Buchanan, as well as upward of some four hundred other messages, upon its completion in 1858, the course of Anglo-American relations might not have suffered the sea change to which they were subjected during the "Second American Revolution," and Jefferson Davis might not have waited in vain for the recognition of "the new republic" which Lord Lyons assured the Foreign Office had come into being. It was 1866 before this "Electric Cable" which the Queen had so earnestly hoped would "prove an additional link between the nations whose friendship is founded upon their common interest and reciprocal esteem" was again in operation; too late to serve the purposes of a war. Time is the element which plays so great a part in a revolution.

JEFFERSON DAVIS came of simple people. His quarterings would have shown only families of artisans, workers in the soil, devout, God-fearing people, with that pluck of the pioneer that is called stout-hearted. They were from Wales, Scotland and Ireland, and came as so many of these emigrants did to Philadelphia, the then outstanding port of entry of the United States. He thought highly of the Scotch-Irish strain his mother, Jane Cook, brought into the family. It was, he said, "a stock characterized by sturdy integrity, intrepidity and intellectual rigor." He recalled that Presidents Monroe and Jackson had the same. Since then other Presidents could be added to that list. He was writing of Calhoun at the time, but it applied to his own ancestry, and he did not go on to say, as he so easily might have done, that the strain carried with it always the quality known by some as determination, and by more as obstinacy. It was to serve him in his hour of need.

This Scotch-Irish mother, of South Carolina, "who had a graceful poetic mind, which, with much of her personal beauty, she retained to extreme old age,"¹ Samuel Davis, the father, had met during his active service in Georgia at the time of the Revolutionary War, and after the war they were married. Beyond this there is very little known of her except that tradition has made her a niece of General Nathanael Greene. But to the end of her long life her son Jefferson gave her the deferential care so characteristic of him.

What Samuel Davis brought into the family was a stock

that never evaded military duty notwithstanding the Quaker background, and its representatives served their country or their State when occasion demanded. His service began when he joined Colonel Elijah Clark's company whose duty was to carry provisions to the Army. He brought supplies to his half brothers, but his promise to his mother to return was only fulfilled at the end of the war. He raised a company of infantry and took part in the siege before Savannah. When he did come back it was to learn of her death and that the property had been wrecked. Beside his own military record three of his sons were in the War of 1812.² But he did not live to see his youngest son, Jefferson, become a professional soldier.

Samuel Davis was of Welsh descent. His forebears had been among those to receive grants from William Penn, which were located in what was known as "The Welsh Tract," some of the lands lying in Pencader Hundred in New Castle County, Delaware, and some in Cecil County, Maryland.³ These settlers were from South Wales, typical immigrants as were the Scotch-Irish in that they were industrious artisans and farmers and very religious, who hoped to spread their Nonconformist faith abroad in the land. Leaving Philadelphia these migrants picked their way down the winding valleys that lie among the foothills, and then between the higher mountains, moving on like a tide into Virginia and the Carolinas where they formed colonies, and thus segregated their Fundamentalism. It was in Pencader Hundred that some of these groups founded "The Baptist Church Meeting Near the Iron Hill," and of this number were John and David Davis, "turners" by trade. John was Jefferson Davis' great-grandfather. Evan Davis was his son, who in time found his way to the Welsh Neck com-

munity in South Carolina, on the Pedee River, where as well he found his wife, a Mrs. Williams. At the birth of their son in 1756 they called him Samuel Emory Davis, for his mother gave him her maiden name. He was Jefferson Davis' father. The grandfather Evan was an active frontiersman who died near Washington, Georgia, and whose grave, by tradition, lies in an open cotton field. But nothing of it remains.⁴ The stump of an old tree marks the site tradition fixes as the place in the old burying ground of the Davis family. David was the father of Samuel Davies, the distinguished Presbyterian minister, living near Richmond, and renowned throughout Virginia for his preaching. He later became the fourth President of the College of New Jersey, now Princeton University, and reckoned as one of his achievements the raising of funds, which he readily obtained in England and Scotland, for "the erection of the edifice known as Nassau Hall."⁵

This Samuel Davies, who so spelled his name then, and for whom Jefferson Davis' father was supposed to be named, and Jefferson Davis, were the two members of the family to reach national importance.

The Scotch-Irish mother adapted herself, it appears, to the émigré instincts of her handsome husband. The mood of the time was migration, and the Davis family, like their forebears, were caught up in it. When Samuel Emory Davis and Jane Cook were married they first settled on a farm near Augusta, Georgia, on land which had been given him for his services in the war, and where a number of their children were born to them. Then rumor came of the Blue Grass country, and they wandered there that Samuel might raise blooded horses, which he knew something about, and take up tobacco planting about which he knew less.

They chose the Green River country in the southwestern part of Kentucky, close to the Tennessee border, in Christian County, now in part Todd County, and had a farm of some six hundred acres. Here their son Jefferson, the youngest of ten children, was born June 3, 1808, in a log cabin built on the site of what is now a part of the village of Fairview. It was what was known as a "double pen" log house. There were four rooms, two on each side of the hall, with puncheon floors. At either end were lath and clay chimneys. Later there were added to the front of the house two "shed rooms." "The doors were hung on wooden hinges and fastened with wooden buttons, and the logs were pegged together." ⁶ Less than eighty miles away another migrant family, the Lincolns, had built a similar cabin and their son Abraham was born there within the same twelvemonth.

Samuel Davis was a Baptist, as were many of these frontier folk, and years later a Baptist church was built where his log house had stood. Now a great highway goes winding past it down the State and carries the name of his boy, Jefferson Davis.

The mood of migration or economic pressure was on them again, and this time they followed the trail to the Southwest, and settled in Bayou Teche Parish in Louisiana. But the wet heat of the lowlands soon caused them to move on into Mississippi, at Woodville, in Wilkinson County, and there the family fortunes came to rest.

Woodville was a court town in later years where, when the court was in session, the gentlemen wore black coats and black cravats and embroidered silk or satin waistcoats, and administered justice above the perfume they used. Here the Davis family lived simply and unpretentiously, with but few slaves, and no overseer in this quiet Mississippi home.

And here for many years after Samuel Davis' death, Jefferson's mother lived.

The place never reached the proportions of a plantation. It was a cotton farm, and there Jefferson Davis picked cotton sometimes as a discipline. One day at school he had been told to memorize some passage. When he failed to do it there was threatened punishment and he took his books to his father and told him the case. He was through with school. Samuel Davis chose a wise course. "Of course," he said, "it is for you to elect whether you will work with head or hands; my son could not be an idler. I want more cotton pickers and will give you work."⁷ For two days Jefferson worked in the fields, then school seemed to him the "lesser evil" and he went back, but not before his father had had something to say about labor as a vocation presenting disadvantages to those not bred to it. But what had really happened was that Samuel Davis had put the first stepping stone in place for his son to become the scholar-planter. Jefferson fished and hunted and had his dogs and learned the ways of the creatures of the swamps and bayous. Chicken fighting also was an amusement till it was found out by his parents and stopped.

Jefferson Davis always thought of his father as a man of great physical activity, whose opinions were law to his children.⁸ He had pride too in that he had inherited his political principles from his father. In a speech in the Senate in later years he spoke of him as one of Mr. Jefferson's "earnest friends."⁹ A fact which may explain the name given to their youngest son by Samuel and Jane Davis. It was a departure from their custom of using only Biblical names. There is a record of "T. J. Davis" and those who find interest in parallels like to point out that the T. was dropped in his

case as was the Thomas in Woodrow Wilson's name. As a boy in Kentucky he was called "Little Jeff."

But he was rather pitifully conscious of his limitations, this father of Jefferson Davis. Samuel Davis declared that lack of knowledge, which was "power," had brought "misery and mischief" to him in his old age. "Use every possible means to acquire useful knowledge," he wrote Jefferson. Certainly he tried to give his son the best education his means and opportunity permitted. He began by sending Jefferson, when he was seven years old, away to school without letting his wife know anything about it, doubtless in the frontier manner. It was a plan to appeal to any boy. There was to be a journey of a thousand miles, on horseback, with pack mules to carry the camp equipment, and in company with another boy of his own years, under the care of a distinguished officer of dragoons, the gallant Major Hinds, with a recent military record at New Orleans. It lay through lands and swamps where cypresses point the way, called The Wilderness, and where, more often than not, the stars were the cover for the night's rest. Better this than the poor inns or the Indian "stands."

The journey brought them to Nashville, Tennessee, and here the boy Davis saw his first military hero, for Major Hinds wanted to pay his respects to his superior officer, General Jackson, and the party went to The Hermitage. Two of Davis' older brothers had served with the General at New Orleans and had been commended by him. Davis always remembered the roomy log house, with the surrounding grain and cotton fields, but more the unaffected and well-bred courtesy of the host.

The year before Jefferson Davis had gone to his first school in the neighborhood—the log cabin variety of song

and story. But this one was different altogether. Near Springfield, at Bardstown, Kentucky, was a Catholic school connected with the church of St. Thomas Aquinas, and under the direction of Dominican priests. The Protestants at this time were engaged in the bickerings of the different sects and the education of the children was of less moment than composing their religious quarrels. The schoolhouse in these regions had yet to be pointed to as the symbol of American life. The Catholic communities had been far more progressive and their schools were in the hands of men of education. Here his father determined to place the boy. There were wide fields rich in their yield and flocks and herds and slaves for the labor of this great property. Here he heard the rhythm of the routine in the daily offices of this Church school, and the precision of the Latin. Perhaps it helped to create that sonorous quality of his speech, which it became later, in his public life, a commonplace to praise. The certain restraint in statement which characterized his speeches may also have had its origin with these early teachers, three of whom were Englishmen.¹⁰ The tuition fee was one hundred dollars, and in Jefferson Davis' case it was paid by one Charles Green, of Bardstown, who is spoken of as his guardian. He always remembered the kindly care of the priests—he was the smallest child in the school and they were patient with him and helpful.

Two years went by. Then he came home. His mother, who had been kept in ignorance of his going away, now insisted upon his coming back. The return journey, made with his guardian, was in the nature of an adventure, too, for by 1817 steamboats were on that part of the Mississippi, and the romance of the river had taken a new form. These wood-burning vessels, belching sparks with the forcing of the fires,

were fitly named for volcanoes—*Ætna*, *Vesuvius*, and so on. The boy remembered that there was such thrill and novelty about these strange carriers that parties would be made up to go on the river for a short distance, boarding the boat at one landing and leaving it perhaps at the next, where they would be met by carriages and be driven back to their plantations.

Jefferson Davis found the "voyage was slow and uneventful";¹¹ but he was only nine years old and impatient to be home again. "I remember wondering why my father should have kissed so big a boy," he said when he recalled his homecoming and meeting his father unexpectedly in the garden.

Hereafter there were somewhat diversified educational experiences. There was a short stay at Jefferson College, so called, in Adams County, Mississippi, and then a return home to attend the new Wilkinson County Academy, which had an excellent head master, John A. Shaw, of Boston, who later was to become the Superintendent of Public Schools in New Orleans. He was the first of his type to come to that part of the South and to place the teaching profession on a new level; creating in fact the notion that it was a profession, and not an auxiliary to preaching. Davis says of him: "I am sure he taught me more in the time I was with him than I ever learned from any one else."¹²

In his fourteenth year he was sent back to his native State, Kentucky, at Lexington, to Transylvania University, "the Southern Harvard," with a reputation placing it in the first class of educational institutions. Transylvania University suffered in the minds of some of the Kentuckians because of two things, that it was under the control of the Presbyterians, and was tainted with Federalism. As it had its grants from the State Legislature the control of the Presbyterians was

forced out by law, and a Unitarian of Connecticut and graduate of Yale, Dr. Holley, became its head.

There was a liberalism here that was in time to disturb the outsiders, and cause a desire to return to the stricter ways, but Jefferson Davis had the benefit of the "Holley Era."

"There I completed my studies in Greek and Latin, and learned a little of algebra, geometry, trigonometry [this was doing very well for there had been the need of a tutor in mathematics], surveying, profane and sacred history, and natural philosophy."¹³ He confesses to taking an honor in his senior year, and some of his friends, who were with him at Transylvania, years afterwards wrote Mrs. Davis that he was considered the "first scholar." The records of the University were all destroyed, but the estimate may rest with his friends. Some of these Transylvania students he was to see again in Congress and the Senate. "When I was serving my first term as United States Senator," he wrote, "I was one of six graduates . . . who held seats in that chamber." Henry Clay's son whom he knew here at Lexington was with him at West Point and with him too at Buena Vista, where Davis made a military record, and Clay lost his life.

He had been sufficiently mischievous to lift him out of the prig class. But he cared little for the sports of the school. Sports seems to have meant football. "Perhaps he did not choose to lose his time from his studies," one fellow student and admirer suggests. But he was manly, had a fine appearance then, and carried himself well. This was the Jefferson Davis of 1824—when in July of that year his father died, and his brother Joseph began to take care of him and to look out for his interests.

I. WEST POINT

It was this brother Joseph who believed Jefferson, at seventeen, to be too young to be graduated. There must be more training, more discipline. Jefferson's own wish lay in the direction of the University of Virginia, whose reputation was beginning to extend down to, and beyond, the Delta, though many were yet to see its unique beauty. He had been named for the President of the United States, who chanced to be the founder of this university. Perhaps he had a boyish wish to go to Charlottesville because of that. But the plan turned out quite differently. Through one of the Congressmen of the lower Mississippi, due in part, no doubt, to his brother's influence, he received an appointment to West Point from President Monroe.¹ Joseph was the oldest of this family of ten children as Jefferson was the youngest, and there were twenty-four years between their ages. "He occupied to me," said Jefferson, "much the relation of a parent."

There was the visit his brother made him while at West Point and when he brought with him his friends from Natchez, Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Howell. Mrs. Howell remembered "his beautiful eyes" and wrote in a letter of his "open, bright expression." Mr. Howell thought him "a promising youth." And both twenty years later thought of him as their son-in-law. But the day of the visit Jefferson was engrossed with this brother, and wanted only to sit by him, and slip his hand through his brother's arm.²

When the restless mood of the period carried the family to Mississippi, Joseph had been left behind in Hopkinsville, Kentucky, to go on with his law studies. Later he had moved to Warren County in Mississippi where he had become a man of fortune. He had practiced law for many years but had found leisure as well to build up a greater wealth as a successful planter. He was a man of consequence, and became one of the millionaires of the Southwest.

The dream plan of the University of Virginia Jefferson gave up somewhat conditionally; that is, he would go to West Point for one year. He made acknowledgment of his appointment to the Secretary of War, John C. Calhoun, in a very characteristic letter.⁸ Its naïveté must have come back to him if, when Secretary of War, he himself received any such a communication:

Lexington, July 7th, 1824
Transylvania Univer [*sic*]

Sir,

The commission of Cadet granted the undersigned March 11th, and remitted to Natchez, on account of my absence was forwarded here. I accept it. Am not able to go on before Sept. for reasons I will explain to the superintendent on my arrival.

Yours &c

JEFFERSON DAVIS

J. C. Calhoun

In August he wrote his sister-in-law from Lexington, where he was staying: "I leave in a short time for West Point, State of New York, where it will always give me pleasure to hear from you."

Again a long journey was to be made and it was September when he entered the United States Military Academy

as a cadet and began the first of a series of connections with the institution. Twice again he had intimate contact with the Academy: the years between 1853-57, when he was Secretary of War in President Pierce's Cabinet; and the more eventful year of 1860-61, when, as United States Senator, he headed a Commission appointed by the President to examine into the needs of its reorganization. But no such thoughts were in his mind that day he wrote his sister-in-law. Rather, they must have been that this new experience was to be for only a year's duration, and that then there would be the years near Monticello. But the year extended to four, "for various reasons," Davis says, without naming them, and in 1828 he received his commission as Second Lieutenant of Infantry.

There were few buildings at the Point when Jefferson Davis entered the Academy, and the cadets were quartered by companies and not by classes. His room for two years was No. 19 in the South Barracks, and he shared it with two other cadets. In the last two years his quarters were in the North Barracks, where the rooms were larger, and a thin partition made a bedroom and study. But there was no betterment of furniture. Three muskets and accoutrements were kept on a rack over the fireplace, and by the side of the open fire were the shelves for their books. The rest of the furniture was one small table and three chairs and these the cadets supplied themselves. They were early taught camp discomfort, for mattresses spread on the floor at night were their beds, and all water for bathing and drinking had to be brought from the spring. There was little amusement. A Saturday half holiday gave a chance for skating in winter, and hiking through the woods in summer, when the Corps was in camp on the plain. But the beginning

and end of amusement lay in following the route to Benny Havens'. Here rations might be supplemented, but it became almost immediately "out of bounds" and always remained so. And Benny Havens nearly cost Jefferson Davis his commission as an officer in the United States Army.

From the \$16 per month pay and the two rations, in value equal to \$28, the cadets were expected to pay all their expenses, since there was a regulation prohibiting their receiving spending money from home. Out of this small allowance Davis always managed to send some to his mother. It was part of the devotion he gave her. She sent it back once or twice. But that hurt his sensitive pride. He was better pleased when she kept it.

The Roll of Cadets, arranged according to merit in conduct, for the year ending June 30, 1828,⁴ showed that Jefferson Davis in his year of graduation had 137 demerits, and that his standing put him in the lower half of a class of thirty-four. He was No. 23. There was a cadet in the second class that same year who had no demerits. His name was Robert E. Lee. Joseph E. Johnston was also in that class with nine demerits.

Davis never had a high standing through any of the four years. It was the friendships made in course that were to be rated higher than academic standing. There were those with Leonidas Polk, and Albert Sidney Johnston, certainly men whose friendships could not be measured by any system of counting.

Mathematics, as at Transylvania, was a difficult subject for him, but there was an Acting Assistant Professor of Mathematics, Denis H. Mahan, who aided him in his study and with whom he formed a warm friendship. Under the regulations at that time, the Superintendent of the Academy was

authorized to detail not exceeding four cadets to discharge the duty of Acting Assistant Professors of Mathematics, and the appointment was considered "an honorable distinction."⁵ A greater distinction for this young professor, perhaps so far as history is concerned, lies in the fact that he had a son who became Rear-Admiral Alfred T. Mahan. At all events he seems to have helped Davis through the maze of mathematics. Some of the textbooks were those in use at the École Polytechnique, and had been brought by Claude Crozet, one of Napoleon's officers, who was teaching at West Point a few years before Jefferson Davis entered as a cadet, and whose successor and disciple, Charles Davies, was the professor of mathematics in Davis' time.

Many French textbooks were in use at the Academy at this period, and a course in the French language was obligatory.⁶ Translations from English into French, and from French into English, were to be made "with accuracy," but of pronunciation it was only asked that it should be done "tolerably." Many years later, when Mr. Davis visited Paris, a French journalist was critical of his use of French. Doubtless he had not bettered the Academy requirements. At the time when, as Secretary of War, he tried the experiment of bringing out a train of camels to Texas to use for transportation purposes through the desert stretches to the Pacific Coast, he had prepared for it by translating, from the French, a book on the uses to which camels could be put.⁷

Under one instructor, the Chaplain, he studied grammar, rhetoric, ethics and constitutional law; and these subjects caught his attention and interest and he stood higher in them than any others during the four years. He was not an outstanding student in any one department, but he gained a certain taste of reading which made a real contribution to his

development in those formative years when he was at his plantation, Brierfield. He took his reading as an accomplishment, one of many he had. He came to be the scholar-planter.

On graduation he took the oath which from 1802 down to 1861 was required of the cadets, as prescribed by the Act of March 16, 1802:

I,, do solemnly swear, that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States of America, and that I will serve them, honestly and faithfully, against all their enemies or opposers whatsoever; and that I will observe and obey the orders of the President of the United States, and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to the Rules and Articles of War.⁸

It was not until August, 1861, that an oath was substituted which was specific in defining the requirements "to maintain and defend the sovereignty of the United States paramount to any and all allegiance, sovereignty or fealty I may owe to any State, county, or country whatsoever."

It is customary to assign Davis' consistent attitude toward State Sovereignty under the Constitution to the book by Rawle—*A View of the Constitution of the United States*—which Calhoun as Secretary of War ordered to be a textbook at West Point, and which was so used down to 1861. The book was published in 1825, the year Calhoun became Vice-President of the United States. He had just finished his service of eight years as Secretary of War under President Monroe. The Academy had received his special attention and he had much to do with its reorganization and bringing it up to a high standard, just as did Davis the man "with the chin like Calhoun's," many years later. But the book, if designated by him as a textbook and ordered for use at the Acad-

emy, must have been published within the first three months of the year 1825. That it was a textbook later appears certain. If it were in use in Davis' time, he was being taught:

If a faction should attempt to subvert the Government of a State for the purpose of destroying its republican form, the national power of the Union could be called forth to subdue it. Yet it is not to be understood that its interposition would be justifiable if a State should determine to retire from the Union. It depends upon the State itself whether it will continue a member of the Union.⁹

Yet one Superintendent certainly thought there to be "no reason to suppose that it ever was prescribed for the classes." Calhoun's doctrine had other ways of impressing itself, and the Nullification Ordinance of South Carolina was seven years away.

Jefferson Davis was court-martialed and nearly expelled from West Point. He had been in several cadet rows. In one fracas which ended in the dismissing of his roommate he was involved as well. But following the tradition of the Corps, Davis refused to give any explanations. This resulted in long confinement, but longer commendation from the cadets. His record, however, had been sufficiently good, notwithstanding the charge against him of going to Benny Havens', and the authorities gave him another chance.

As a cadet he was well liked in the Corps, and a classmate remembered that "his figure was very soldier-like and rather robust, his step springy, resembling the tread of an Indian brave on the war path."¹⁰

West Point was a dominating force in Davis' life. He had it under his care as Secretary of War, and its reorganization in 1860 was made through the Commission of which he, a member of the Military Committee of the Senate, was

President.¹¹ In the bitterness of the time, during and after the war, it was charged against Mr. Davis that, in the two years before the war, he had tried to undermine the loyalty at the Point and direct the interest of the cadets toward the Southern position. It was, so it was said, for that purpose that he secured the appointment as head of the Commission.¹²

This Commission was a carefully selected one comprising the Hon. Solomon Foote, of the Senate, and the Hon. Henry Winter Davis, of the House of Representatives. And the Army was represented, oddly enough, by Major Robert Anderson and Captain A. A. Humphreys. The Commission heard testimony from many distinguished officers and graduates, including former Superintendents of the Academy, one of whom was Colonel R. E. Lee. And the report as finally completed made, among others, the recommendation to extend the course of study to five years; that there should be no reduction in the scientific or mathematical subjects—no reduction, in short, of standard at the moment “when many of the great States of Europe were endeavoring to raise it”; but most pertinently of all, it declared, “demerit marks are not, in any sense, a punishment but merely a record of conduct.” Doubtless, this was a gratification to the President of the Commission if he recalled his 137!

In a little more than a year's time, Jefferson Davis, President, not of the Commission, but of the Confederate States, was explaining to William Henry Russell, the war correspondent of the *London Times*, that “perhaps we are the only people in the world where gentlemen go to a military academy who do not intend to follow the profession of arms.”¹³

His interest in the Academy always remained. He took away with him from the Point a certain discipline of mind

which, added to his natural aloofness, made him forbidding and difficult of approach when he became the Commander-in-Chief of the Confederate Army.

It was said of him that his preference for officers was always the West Pointers; that he neglected civilians with military ambitions, whose appointment would have made for better feeling, to give the place to the trained officer. It was a problem singularly acute in the South where regiments were raised and equipped and offered for service, and the officers chosen by the regiment. It was a problem as old as war itself. It will be a problem as long as war shall last.

When as an old man he had begun the dictation of his *Memoirs*, after a few brief statements concerning his life and his friends there, he added, "I shall tell a great deal of West Point, and I seem to remember more every day." But he carried those memories away with him.

II. THE ARMY

Six brief years spanned the active army life of Lieutenant Davis except for his service in the Mexican War. Yet there persisted a legend about him to the end of his life that soldiering had been his major interest. Politically, it proved a help to him. These six years for the most part were spent in the coveted frontier service, where an Indian war was to be had for the asking. Forts and barracks had to be built and repaired, and so lumbering became part of an army officer's duty. Jefferson Davis was said to be the first lumberman in Missouri. Details changed rapidly as need required, and within a year he had been ordered from Jefferson Barracks at St. Louis, his first post after graduation, to

Fort Crawford, built on the site of the present Prairie du Chien.

In the summer of 1829 he was sent on detached service with a file of soldiers, and these were the first white men, so Davis told an historian, to go over the country between the portage of the Wisconsin and Fox Rivers to a village called Chicago. It was a pleasant detail for summer, with deer and pheasants and wild fowl in abundance for subsistence. There were two years, from 1829 to 1831, when he was stationed at Fort Winnebago and he believed that the garrison there were ignorant of the Four Lakes, until he saw them. At these different outposts of the Army Davis found sometimes his friends of West Point as well as those from Transylvania. Any detail was sure to bring friends together. There were Albert S. Johnston, Thomas F. Drayton and now others here at Winnebago. John Jacob Astor's trading posts lay along through this country, and the Indians moved in and out, for the most part upon peaceful business.

The work of lumbering was another detail along the Red Cedar River. The wood was needed in the construction work for the buildings at Fort Crawford, and Davis had his men here through the early part of 1829. He learned at first hand frontier lumber exactions, even to rafting the logs and getting them to the Mississippi where they drifted their way down to Prairie du Chien. Two years later he was sent up the Yellow River on similar detail, but with the added responsibility of building a sawmill for the Government. It was work well done, but a greater skill was shown in his ability to make friends with the Indians who were near and were never without thought of raids upon the white man's camp. The friendship they gave him took the Indian form

of his initiation into the brotherhood of one of the tribes by a chief, and from then on he was called "Little Chief." The boy who had made the long journey through the wilderness, on his way to school, who knew the ways of bog and wood, and nights in the open, and had the love of the land in his blood, found his own way to deal with and satisfy these age-long denizens of the land.

What he didn't know were the frost and cold of these northern forests, and his life was nearly gone with pneumonia in "the winter of the deep snow," as this year was always to be known in the Northwest. It is a cold of its own up through this North country, and the exposure—the contrast to the warmth and glow of his Southland where he had spent more than half of his twenty years—ended in the sharp illness. It was thought that much of his ill health that he always had thereafter could be traced to the long months of weakness that followed this sickness. The strain under such living told lastingly on a nervous system peculiarly sensitive. To the end of his life Davis was always something of a hypochondriac. He probably owed his life to the care of his body servant, James Pemberton, who had come with him from "The Hurricane," his brother's plantation, when he left there after his furlough following graduation from West Point. This young negro slave had been with Davis since both were boys, and it was James Pemberton who was left in charge of Brierfield when his master took the Mississippi Rifles to Mexico.

The years at Fort Winnebago were soon gone and he was back at Fort Crawford and reporting to a new commanding officer, Colonel Zachary Taylor. It was the beginning of a connection that reached far on the long arm of consequence. Colonel Taylor ordered his young lieutenant to Galena, in

Illinois, where the miners had come to work the newly discovered lead ore deposits. It was the old story of making agreements with the Indians, whose claim to the land no one except the miners could deny, and it was the business of the Army to safeguard life and property till the treaty with the Indians was made. These men who had come to work the mines were typical land adventurers who moved on from place to place, wherever the end of the rainbow beckoned. For the moment Galena offered the end and they were ready to fight for their squatter claims. The Indians in the locality were equally ready to prevent the occupation. The treaty which had been made with the Government and signed at Prairie du Chien ceded all lands belonging to the Sauks and Foxes east of the Mississippi, and the whole area was to be opened at once to the settlers. The Government was seeking an adjustment through treaty, and it was on this business that Lieutenant Davis was sent with his detachment of soldiers. He succeeded in winning the confidence of both Indians and miners, and thereby secured a truce. The miners were to file their claims, and wait the treaty compensation the Government would make to the Indians for giving up the lands, after which they might return to their squatter holdings.

Black Hawk, the old Chief of the Sauks and Foxes, thought little of the arrangement when completed at Washington. The payment was small—he had received some sixty thousand bushels of corn—and what also remained in his mind was the steady if slow urge of the Government that had driven him and his tribe across the Mississippi and the taking of his old lands and those of his fathers from him. He treated the matter, in short, as a scrap of paper. The Black Hawk War was to come out of some of the outrages the old

chief and his tribe committed on the white people, and because of as many the white people practiced upon them. There were those who thought another ration of corn underlay the purpose.¹⁴ But Black Hawk and his men were soon on the war-path and a reign of terror began along the Rock River. The uprising led to the calling out of the Illinois militia, and a young, awkward, uncouth lad answered with the rest. He gave his name as Abraham Lincoln and he was sworn in by young Lieutenant Robert Anderson,¹⁵ who was many years later to act under the orders of this raw recruit, then become Commander-in-Chief of the United States forces. And this brief enlistment with the Illinois militia, a part of which he served in Captain J. M. Early's company, was the sole active military experience of Abraham Lincoln.

This frontier war ended in the defeat of the Indians at a battle called Bad Axe, not far from the Mississippi River. But Black Hawk was not captured until Lieutenant Davis and his men, who had been sent by Colonel Taylor from Fort Crawford to an island up the river, found him under a flag of truce, with some friendly Winnebagoes who surrendered the old Chief to the young Lieutenant. Black Hawk left a record of his impression of the young officer who was detailed to take him and the other prisoners down to Jefferson Barracks at St. Louis.

"We started to Jefferson Barracks in a steamboat, under the charge of a young war chief [Lieutenant Davis] who treated us all with much kindness. He is a good and brave young chief, with whose conduct I was much pleased."¹⁶

The way of the service in the next two years took Davis to Kentucky at Lexington on recruiting service and later to Galena, his old duty, and finally to the distant frontier at Fort Gibson in Arkansas. He had been promoted to First

Lieutenant in a new regiment of dragoons, and on his return from Kentucky was made adjutant of the regiment. He had shown himself capable in detail and able to handle his men.

It was in these years at Fort Crawford that he met and fell in love with his Colonel's daughter, Sarah Knox Taylor. She was a girl of eighteen when he first saw her, graceful, rather small and dark, with wavy brown hair and hazel eyes, and danced well, so well indeed she was said to be one of the best dancers in Kentucky. He called her "Knox" after General Washington's Secretary of War. Romance and fiction have long overlain the realities of their marriage. That the Colonel refused his consent to the marriage seems certain. Upon what grounds is uncertain. The commanding officer had means to halt the courtship, and he sent his young adjutant to the distant Arkansas post at Fort Gibson. The young officer had means of countering this, and he resigned from the Army a year and a half later and his marriage took place shortly after. Various reasons are assigned to Davis' decision to leave the Army. To suit romance, it would be this distant post to which he had been sent by his would-be father-in-law that determined him to be free to marry his Colonel's daughter. Another and more likely one is that his health had been undermined in the long illness resulting from the bitter cold of the North country. He may have felt that he had had all the soldier life was likely to offer: the frontier duty, an Indian war. The Oregon irritations were of a later date, and war with Great Britain was unlikely at that time. It may have been just the nostalgia for the river's ways down on his brother Joseph's plantation. It is possible that his brother was responsible and wanted Jefferson to be a successful planter as he had become. It was this brother who more than any one

else influenced him. Whatever the cause, it was a short army duty, this six years. But it was to affect his whole life and be the background, together with his service in Mexico, to enforce his claim to military experience and therefore entitle him to be heard in military decisions in the Confederate Army. "By education, by association, by preference, I was a soldier," he wrote. Many years later, in 1850, in fact, in a speech on the Compromise of that year, he recalled how certain his duty would have been as an officer had his regiment been ordered, as the rumor then was it would be, to Charleston to enforce Federal law over the South Carolina Nullification Ordinance. "Much as I valued my commission," he said, "much as I desired to remain in the Army, and disapproving as much as I did the remedy resorted to, that commission would have been torn to tatters before it would have been used in civil war with the State of South Carolina."¹⁷

It was, of course, as a speech, made for political effect to show how stout was his feeling on State Sovereignty. Three years later he was Secretary of War of the United States, and in that capacity handing to the cadets at West Point upon their graduation their commissions as officers in the United States Army. But in giving the diplomas the Secretary was not obliged to state the reservations in his own mind which he must have attached to these commissions. He had made clear his position in his Compromise Speech.

There seems to be no reliable evidence for Colonel Taylor's sudden dislike of the younger man. Both were capable of strong dislikes, and with the advancing success of the younger officer some of the West Point aloofness may not have been acceptable to the man who won the title "Old Rough and Ready." It was often said that when Davis disliked he could be very disagreeable.¹⁸ But both men were

soldiers and in the after years neither denied to the other all possible credit. But Colonel Taylor preferred Lieutenant Davis as an officer to a son-in-law.

Shortly after Davis was ordered to Fort Gibson, Miss Taylor went to Kentucky, near Lexington, and lived with her aunt, and it was in her house at Beechland, in the early summer of 1835, that Jefferson Davis and Sarah Knox Taylor were married. The bride wore her traveling gown and a small hat that matched it. The bridegroom was dressed more elaborately with "a long-tail cutaway coat, brocaded waistcoat, breeches tight-fitting and held under the instep with a strap, and a high stove-pipe hat."¹⁹ He seems to have been conspicuous otherwise by the fact that he was the only person present who did not cry at the ceremony.

They went by boat down the rivers, the Ohio and the Mississippi, to "The Hurricane," his brother Joseph's plantation, and here they stayed till their own place was ready for them. Joseph Davis had given his brother a thousand acres of the land lying next his plantation. He regarded it as an offset to the negroes his father had given him. The young army officer began the life of a planter, and went about the business of it with the directness of the man used to command. He had bought fourteen negro slaves, his brother Joseph loaned him the money for the purchase, and the work of clearing away the tangled fields of old canebrake and brier went on. A house was built, to be known as "The Brierfield." In the years to come it was to mean romance and tragedy and defeat.

Within a year his wife had died of malarial fever. They had gone down to his sister's place, near Bayou Sara in Louisiana, as being more healthful than Brierfield when the "fever season" was on. But they had lingered too long, and

both were taken ill when they reached the plantation. His own life flickered in the rise and fall of the fever's course and he had not been told how ill she was. Then there was one day when he heard her in the delirium of fever singing a favorite air, "Fairy Bells," and he tried to go to her. But she had died with the song unfinished. A lonely grave in Feliciana Parish marks the end of this short romance of Jefferson Davis. The shock of his young wife's death made his own recovery very slow. When he was able to be moved and came back to "The Hurricane" he was still so prostrated that it was thought best he should try a winter in Cuba, and later in October he took a sailing ship for Havana, a three weeks' sail.

Wherever he went, the tall, athletic figure, with its West Point erectness, attracted attention. He was always the soldier. When he was seen near the fortifications in Havana, where he had gone to sketch, his military appearance suggested that he might be a spy, and he was warned away. He was told that if he were seen making plans of the fortifications or watching the drill he would be taken prisoner. He would then have to do chain-gang work and break stones. It was made very explicit. He soon realized he was under surveillance. Yet the time was to come when he was to be asked to lead an expedition to liberate Cuba.²⁰ It was after he had come back from the Mexican War with a military reputation. He thought it inconsistent with his duty, as did young Major Robert E. Lee, who was also approached.

All this espionage soon became very wearisome and he left for New York and Washington. Here he made the acquaintance of Franklin Pierce, who at that time had attracted no especial attention in Congress, but who was an agreeable member of the "Congressional Mess" which Davis had been

asked to join during his stay at the Capital. These two men had similar tastes. Both were rather dandified about their dress and carried it off with a certain air of distinction, and a courtesy that was marked enough to be commented on. They became friends. Nearly twenty years later Pierce called Davis away from the peaceful ways of Brierfield to enter his Cabinet.

Davis lingered in Washington into the spring and then went back to Mississippi, refreshed in mind and body, and began again a planter's life. He was not to leave Brierfield for eight years, and they were, as it turned out, the really formative years of his life.

THEY called it the Davis Bend, this stretch of land that makes out into the river some thirty-six miles below Vicksburg, where the two fine plantations of the brothers were. "The Hurricane," which belonged to Joseph Davis, was a plantation brought to a high perfection, and was known as such in the Southwest river country. The house was a large three story one with "high pointed dormers" and wide galleries surrounding it on each floor, the lowest one of brick such as are found in so many of the Southern houses. It was shaded by magnificent oaks that went on acre after acre. Close to the main house was the annex with its great dining room and music room where the young people danced, as young Varina Howell was to know when she came on a visit to "The Hurricane" and went away engaged to Jefferson Davis. The rose garden at the back of the house soon lost itself in orchards of peach, fig and apple trees, and near by were the stables with their thirty stalls. It was in the Davis blood to breed horses, and the turf came to know several of those from the Davis stables. This pacing stock was said to be renowned even in a country where the pacer was reckoned the best-gaited horse. They could ride, these Mississippians, and it was an accepted part of a "gentleman's equipment" to know the lineage of his horses and their performance.¹ It was one of these horses, Tartar, that Jefferson Davis took with him to Mexico, and another, Black Oliver, that came into General Grant's possession when these plantations passed into Federal hands. The General thought the horse the best

he had. As a matter of course there were always horses for the guests and not infrequently they were given to friends. Varina Howell always remembered the horse Jefferson Davis had selected for her on this first visit to "The Hurricane."

Brierfield, Jefferson Davis' plantation, which lay next "The Hurricane," became in time a valuable property too. When he came back in the spring after his wife's death, the long shadow of that sorrow was still upon the place. But he was now ready to take up life again, and his occupation lay before him in Brierfield's many acres, and here he lived in a seclusion not usual in Southern life, for eight years. It was that form of living that made the men of the South reflective, resourceful and very sure of the light they lived by. The long evenings after the days' routine of the plantation gave hour upon hour for study and for such reading and thinking as might form, if one's interest lay that way, a statesman's background.

It was in his brother Joseph's "office," as the room was called which opened from the wide hall running through the center of the house at "The Hurricane" and corresponded to the "tea room" for the ladies on the opposite side, that the foundations were laid for the political thought of Jefferson Davis. *Elliot's Debates*, *The Federalist*, Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* were source material and were read and discussed by the brothers. Of first importance were the Congressional Debates. There were always the *National Intelligencer* and the *Richmond Enquirer* and *Charleston Mercury* for the newspapers, which for that time carried a surprising amount of foreign news. It was through them that the brothers must have learned how England had met the problem of slavery. The work of Wilberforce and the Quakers had been consummated. The work of Eli

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Thayer and the enterprise of the New England Emigration Society were having their beginnings, and the first issue of the *Liberator* had appeared but five years before, and in the same year had occurred the Nat Turner insurrection in Southampton County, Virginia, which was to indicate how grave a matter the rising of the blacks might be. This poor creature, a Baptist preacher, stirred some of his fellow slaves to bloody action by telling of similar practices of their race in Santo Domingo. Beginning with his master's household, Turner and his small band of followers killed some fifty whites, mostly women and children, and then met their own deaths, after trial, by execution in Richmond. In the mood of the time there were those in the South who sought to relate these two circumstances, the publication of the *Liberator* and the Nat Turner insurrection.

Politics was always the pastime of the Southerner. When conversation could be taken from horses, dogs, hunting, or the crops of the plantation, it inevitably turned to county matters, and then to the larger politics of the State. The highest office in the Government had been held by men from the South with but three exceptions—the two Adamses and Martin Van Buren—from its beginning down to the time when these brothers talked the evenings away on political theory, and the Government was not yet fifty years old. It is easy to see how the mind of Jefferson Davis in these formative years was directed more and more to politics. A way of living curiously relieved of stress and strain gave leisure for reading and reflection. Conversation, which throughout the South nearly always reached the point of accomplishment if not of art, made a training school for the oratory that strewed the Halls of Congress thick as the Vallombrosa leaves. And

the Davis brothers were adepts. And the way was being marked out for Jefferson Davis' political rise.

The subject of slavery in some of its forms came and went with the changing days, but at the moment it was not a problem to these brothers. Labor was at their hand, and labor that could survive the climatic conditions. In conversation, or later in debate, it was constantly pointed out how the improvement in the negroes by their long association with the planter class was far greater as compared with the gangs the New England slave traders fetched with them from the African coast. They and many others of the Southland were, as Mr. Davis himself said, an agricultural people and they concerned themselves with matters of the soil, improvement in method to secure a better yield, and different experiments. A more scientific treatment of soil restoration awaited another day.

But the virgin soil was rich soil and it was only the constant tillage and lack of crop rotation that ever depleted it. Each acre was expected to yield a bale and a half of cotton, thus making eight or ten bales for each good field hand.²

The pine barrens, the sentinels of poor soil, were here and there, but they soon gave way in some of the forest reaches to beech and elm, and the magnolias with leaf and bloom made beauty all along the upper river land. The roadsides, with high hedgerows of tangled brier and Cherokee roses, were curving lines of color all through the country, marking off the plantations that lay on either side. The furrowed hillsides, with wash of rains and soil made sterile with the planting year after year of the same crop, had to be abandoned for other land that would give the yield the planters sought. But beyond the hedgerows were the river lands and

unstinting richness of the soil. It was to such lands the hill-country people came.

The plantation at Brierfield was rapidly coming to a fine perfection, too, under Mr. Davis' own care and the wise counsels of his planter brother. He had seen the panics of some years bring periods of depression in their wake, but in the main the telling of the story of those years was that of wealth in this magic yield of the cotton. It was not unusual for a crop to sell in one year for double the price of the land along the lowland acres, and by the time that Jefferson Davis had given up soldiering for the life of a planter, he was learning how these Mississippi lands and all those that bordered the Gulf had distanced the crops of the Atlantic seaboard. It was a knowledge he carried with him when he was in the United States Senate, as well as when, as Secretary of War, he knew that in the single year of 1853 the estimated cotton crop in Texas alone had been 120,000 bales, and that for the past dozen years it had been doubling yearly. Small wonder he envisioned expansion of territory or that a railroad following a route which would be the carrier for the cotton country to the westward was one to be urged. The year before the war the delta country was furnishing "three of the whole country's four million bales."³ Cotton was indeed king, and three-fourths of all the field slaves were in his service. In the earlier years at Brierfield Jefferson Davis was building towards this end. That he did not use the knowledge as President of the Confederacy, and so lost the chance to make it the surest weapon of the South, many of his Southern critics regard as one of his major failures.

Out beyond the hedgerows that marked off the plantations, the types of their owners were as varying as the plantations themselves were alike to one another.

It was in this period of the middle 'thirties that the rich hill lands between Natchez and Vicksburg were invaded by the migrants who had learned of the likely wealth. But since 1820, when the industrial depression in Virginia had been first felt, this trek to the Southwest had been going on. Each decade saw a doubling or more of the population. The proportion of slaves rose from forty to forty-seven per cent.⁴ An American principle of equality of opportunity for land owners was under way in this region and it was seized upon by the people who were told of the possibilities of the country.

There was another type as well. It was not infrequent when a man of consequence, such as Colonel Thomas S. Dabney, of Gloucester County, Virginia, decided to try for the greater wealth rumored of Mississippi, that other citizens and friends of the locality, were ready to make the venture too. In the case of this distinguished Virginian, both relatives and friends accompanied him. He was given a farewell dinner at Richmond where the Governor presided, and where many apt words were said of Mississippi's gain and Virginia's loss.⁵ The autumn season had been chosen and the fine weather made the two months' journey none too long. At the end of the journey the two hundred slaves he had brought were at work upon the plantation. It was a typical migration.

His choice of plantation lay to the east of Vicksburg and in time covered some four thousand acres. Soon the whole district from Vicksburg to Natchez consisted largely of plantations of this size, and the small farmer was edged out. Then another familiar American principle had begun to operate. The small slave-owners could not compete with

those who had many. The farmers who had no slaves got out from the pine barrens what they could.

Such fantastic doubling in investment soon brought the speculator planter, and with him the hurrying migrants that follow every trail to the desired end. The "cotton snob," who began so simply that the profit from the quick turnover of the cotton crop could be placed again in the plantation, soon became the new rich of the region.⁶ The river brought its bandits and gamblers and Showboats, and the poor whites that followed along the way rumor led, came slowly to form the dwellers in the river towns and to make up the populations who were to learn their politics at county towns, the barbecues and negro sales. These were some of Mr. Davis' constituents as well as those others whose interests and tastes were similar to the scholar-planter at Brierfield, and whose broad lands made the river counties of the State.

It was in the year 1845 that there began to be talk of Jefferson Davis having constituents. His quiet routine at Brierfield was changed. He was to emerge to take his place in the politics of his State, and he was to marry Varina Howell. It was now little more than a year since she had come on the visit to "The Hurricane" under the escort of her tutor, Judge Winchester. The visit was timed for the Christmas holidays, and when she went back to her father's plantation, "The Briers" at Natchez, it was to tell of her lover Jefferson Davis. The Howells were an old Whig family in the State. They had come in the migration of the early part of the century like many of the other planter families. Her father was an officer under Commodore Decatur, and served with distinction in the War of 1812. He was a native of New Jersey, the son of an officer with a fine record in the American Revolution, and who was eight times elected Governor of

the State. After the war William Howell had come down the river to Natchez to see the country that was now so talked of with its rich hill and river lands. It was here he met and married one of the Kempe family, originally of Virginia, that too had followed the migration manner of the time. He and Joseph Davis were close friends, and for long it had been a promise that his daughter Varina should visit "The Hurricane." Miss Varina was a girl not yet eighteen, rather vivid with her dark eyes and hair; her high color and graceful carriage. She had a certain haughtiness that in later years was criticized probably unjustly, for it was rather a poise of mind that was hers even at this time. Jefferson Davis was on his way to Vicksburg to make his first political speech when he came by his niece's plantation, Diamond Place, some thirteen miles north of "The Hurricane," where Varina Howell was staying, to say that she would be expected there the following day. She wrote her mother of his coming:

"Today Uncle Joe sent, by his younger brother (did you know he had one?), an urgent invitation to me to go at once to 'The Hurricane.' I do not know whether this Mr. Jefferson Davis is young or old. He looks both at times; but I believe he is old, for from what I hear he is only two years younger than you are. He impresses me as a remarkable kind of man, but of uncertain temper, and has a way of taking for granted that everybody agrees with him when he expresses an opinion, which offends me; yet he is most agreeable and has a peculiarly sweet voice and a winning manner of asserting himself. . . . I do not think I shall ever like him as I do his brother Joe. Would you believe it, he is refined and cultivated, and yet he is a Democrat!"⁷

Her memory of going to make the visit was that she rode

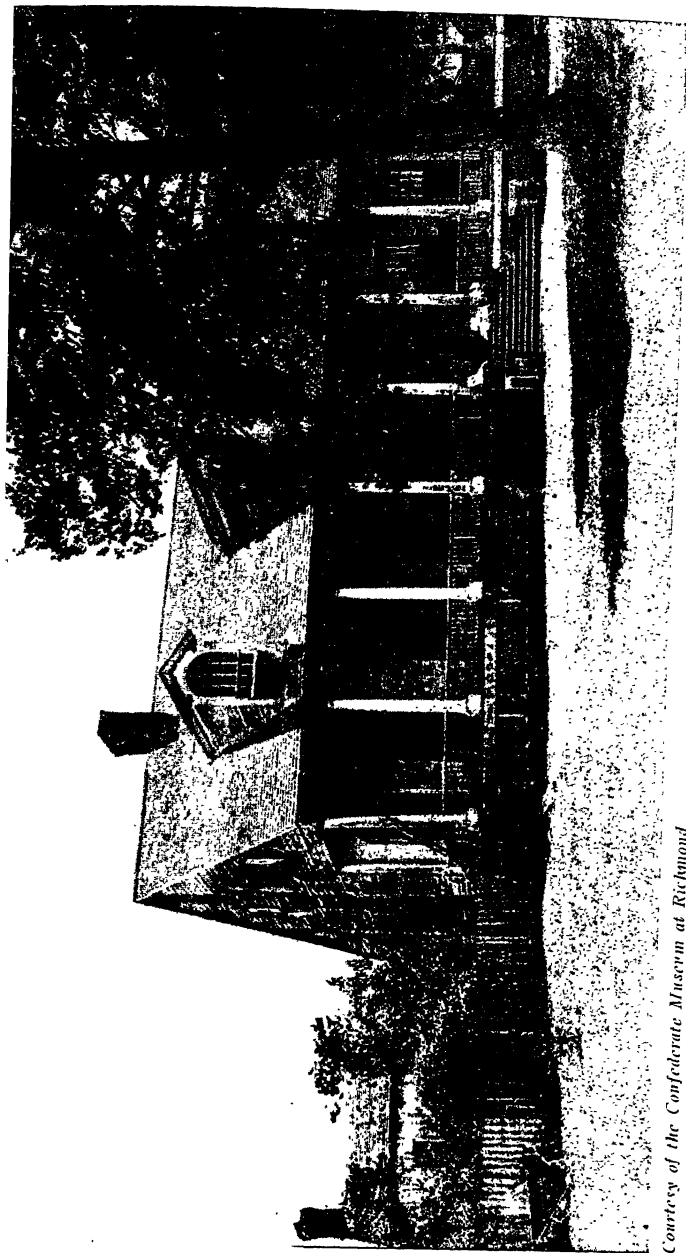
away "all in the blue unclouded weather." So little of her life was ever again to be unclouded!

Before she left "The Hurricane" they were engaged. She had reconciled the incongruity of a gentleman being a Democrat to her girlish satisfaction, and had given a love that ended only with her long life.

Their wedding day was February 26, 1845, and the simple ceremony was at her father's house. There was the modish wedding journey by steamboat to New Orleans. But in a few weeks they were back at Brierfield, the only place that in all the changes of the years she or Jefferson Davis ever called home.

Brierfield she soon learned was a plantation where discretion and justice were practiced.

Any plantation to be brought to its perfection meant the skilled handling of labor to secure the best results. The negroes at Brierfield were allowed a form of self-government, a trial by a jury of their peers, and they were taught the legal form of holding it. The plan had been worked out by Joseph Davis on "The Hurricane" plantation but was practiced by both brothers. The master's share was that he retained the pardoning power. It was only when the jury convicted a slave that corporal punishment was ever permitted. The master of Brierfield had other ways to deal with his slaves. This method of handling them became well known throughout the river plantations, and it presented the example of the "peculiar institution" at its best. The slaves showed the effect of the direction of the military officer, they were well-ordered and disciplined, and the basis of it all was justice. He would ask of his men only what they knew he would ask of himself. James Pemberton had seen his master work with his own hands in the clearing of the plantation



Courtesy of the Confederate Museum at Richmond

"THE BRIERS"

Where Jefferson Davis and Varina Howell were married, February 26, 1845

when it first came into his possession. This system as carried on by the brothers with slavery is now the accepted plan in any group organization to secure the greatest freedom in safeguarding the rights of the individual. Had all the plantations been conducted in such fashion the world would have lost the caustic records of Miss Martineau and the more sympathetic letters of Fanny Kemble. Nor could Olmsted, the Arthur Young of the South as he is often called, have seen at Brierfield, as he did see some years later in the country not far from Jefferson Davis' boyhood home at Woodville, a gang of forty negro women, led by an old driver, with hoes over their shoulders, "walking with a free, powerful swing, like *chasseurs* on the march." They wore a sort of uniform of a "bluish check stuff, the skirt reaching a little below the knee; their legs and feet were bare." Behind them were the men, about thirty, a sort of cavalry, "but a few of them women, two of whom rode astride on their plow mules. A lean and vigilant white overseer, on a brisk pony, brought up the rear. The men wore small blue Scotch bonnets, many of the women handkerchiefs . . . and a few nothing at all on their heads."⁸ His impression, however, was that the negroes in all this locality appeared uncommonly well. The Davis Bend system had, seemingly, had its effect upon the countryside.

At no time was Jefferson Davis an extensive slave holder, as his brother Joseph was, having not more than thirty-six slaves⁹ in his own right, but that represented a fair property, for the best field hands were bringing \$1,250 to \$1,500, a scale based in the old days of fixing the price of a negro by the rate cotton was selling by the pound. This rating of value, however, was not always accurate. Some observers and economists of the time felt that the great demand for

slaves in the Southwest, which had to be supplied from the older States, would keep the prices up, and that their relations to the price of cotton was a phrase and not an indisputable economic fact.

The observing Russell found it very interesting that he could learn from no one what the cost of maintenance per slave was. There seemed to be no interest in that item, however exact was the purchase price. One estimate placed it at fifteen dollars a year, while others put it as high as sixty.¹⁰ In the main this relation between capital and labor did not require exact computation. The sun shone upon a land that was fair and the land gave of its yield and the negroes were to be cared for as a part of that bounty. Certainly such was their lot at Davis Bend.

The slaves were encouraged to do better than their ordinary work and were helped to make the change. One negro at Davis Bend had a store and the Davis families bought from him. The quarters all had their pieces of ground and around the cabins were fruit trees and the chicken houses and the sweet potato patch. There was the plantation nursery for the children and always the well-stocked storerooms for the supplies of all sorts, calicoes, candy, field implements, medicine, harness, saddles, and every need of the household. It was part again of the self-contained unit the plantation was. A Mississippi custom was to give a barrel of molasses or less as a Christmas present to the slaves and sometimes the promise of this would be used to reconcile negroes who had been bought elsewhere to come to the river country.¹¹ Reward and punishment reduced the system to its simplest terms.

The social scale of the negroes was gauged by the type of the labor, the field hands being in the lowest round and the

house and body servants at the top. James Pemberton, the young slave who went with Jefferson Davis as his body servant when he left for his first detail after graduating from West Point, belonged to the best type, and in the legends and facts woven around the Davis tradition is a happy part in it all. And he was always James. Some one once asked Mr. Davis why he called him James, and he said he thought it "disrespect to give a nickname." They were friends, this James Pemberton and Jefferson Davis. When he came to see his master he would never be seated until asked to do so. Sometimes it was Mr. Davis who brought him the chair. Once there was a serious occurrence on the plantation. "How do you think it happened, James?" Mr. Davis asked. "I rather think from my neglect," was James' reply.¹² In time he became the foreman and it was not until after his death in 1852 that there were white overseers at Brierfield. But the authority of the overseer was kept in check. He could report faults, misdeeds and minor matters, but the whip lash could never be used. It was James Pemberton under the direction of Mr. Davis who had built Brierfield with the negroes on the plantation, and who cared for it when his master was in Mexico. And it was the James Pembertons who gave to that illusive expression "The South" a meaning known only to those they served.

Absenteeism was to be the problem at Brierfield, as it was that of many plantations. It was only a few months after his marriage to Varina Howell that Davis was carried into political life and elected a Member of Congress in the autumn of 1845. The ways of the scholar-planter were left behind, and from then on for the next seventeen years, he was almost continuously at Washington.

THE middle decade of the first half of the nineteenth century saw a great increase in population throughout the region of the rich reaches of the Delta, and in Mississippi alone in twenty years it had grown to some three hundred thousand. The Government's customary policy with the Indians was driving them away from the river lands, and the cotton planters were to learn of the rapid returns from this alluvial soil. The monoculture of Virginia, tobacco, was exchanged for what was to become that of the Lower South, cotton, and the basis of Mississippi's wealth as a Sovereign State had its beginning. Virginia, on the other hand, was in the throes of an industrial depression, and while slaves could be readily disposed of it was not so easy to make a sale of the land. The cotton planters, having found what the possibilities were, sought labor, and heavy traffic in slaves began.

Soon a trek to the Southwest was the stirring movement of the time, and inevitably in this migration were the speculators to outwit, if possible, the pioneers. The effects of these efforts were to be seen later in the bond issues. Davis tells that the settlers in the country along the river, in his boyhood, were largely Kentuckians, Virginians and Tennesseans, while the eastern part of the State had been taken by South Carolinians and Georgians,¹ and these people were slave owners who brought their slaves with them. So Mississippi and indeed all the Gulf States developed their commonwealths with slavery as their cornerstone, and began to realize their economic wealth through the yield of the land,

and the slaves were half the factor in the yield. Political difficulties through labor had yet to concern any one, and it was many years afterward that Justice Lamar said he never entertained a doubt as to the soundness of the Southern system until he found that slavery could not stand a war.²

If the Old South suffered at this time, it was the moment of elation for the Lower South, for there was rapidly being unrolled across the wide fields of those Gulf States a magic carpet whose pattern was that of a soft white ball. With wealth to be come by so easily, and a social order devised by the dominant race, with the river playing its part to make easy the ways to the open sea, and so to the distant markets, plantation life offered much.

And so Jefferson Davis had found it in the development at Brierfield. When the Southern planter was not engaged in the actual physical direction of his land, he was reflecting on the way to develop for political betterment the views of the people, many of them the poor whites, who formed his county, and then by groups his State. With communication chiefly the direct address to the people in the court town of the county, the politician had the best means possible of forming public opinion, the impressing of personality through the emotional effect of the voice. The planter who regulated the labor of his slaves through his own position of command carried the notion to the outside, and used this persuasive force to formulate a political belief his hearers should accept. The Southern politician found this form of paternalism an admirable means of regulating party opinion, and none used it with more telling effect than Jefferson Davis. The time was coming when he was to be asked to use it for his State.

During these planter years at Brierfield he had seen Mis-

Mississippi, largely through the efforts of the speculators there over-running it in the wake of the cotton rise, bring itself to a critical pass with the issue of State Bonds. The bonds, issued by the Planter's Bank and the Union Bank, amounting to about \$7,000,000, ceased interest payment in the early 'forties, and the Governor of the State urged their repudiation. This the Legislature refused to do, but a Democratic success at the polls in a later election accomplished the repudiation, and Mississippi had a bar sinister on her shield. The Whig Party, entirely out of sympathy with the repudiation, had tried to force the acknowledgment of the lawfulness of the debt, and the issue was one that the State politics kept active well up to the time of the war. The Democrats were the party of repudiation, but Mr. Davis did not follow his party on this issue. He believed the obligations of the State should be met, as the Union bank bonds were, and their validity be determined by the courts. An election soon took place for the State Legislature in Warren County where there were two Whig candidates for the Mississippi House of Representatives. This presented a doubtful hope at best of overcoming the Democratic opponent. He was, however, a weak candidate and was withdrawn. Jefferson Davis took his place and made his first political speech. There was left only a week for the campaign and in that time one of the Whig candidates withdrew, leaving but one to oppose the Democrat. The defeat of Mr. Davis was certain. The debate with the great Whig orator, Sargeant S. Prentiss, at Vicksburg on Election Day, passed into tradition in the Southwest. But the bond subject was not in the debate, as it was one on which they were agreed.

The Whig candidate was elected, but Mississippi had learned that the Democrats might have a future leader.

The business of the repudiation of the bonds continued to hang about State politics, and later many efforts were made to link Jefferson Davis with it since it was an act of his party. He disposes of the charge in this way: "As this was the only occasion on which I was ever a candidate for the legislature of Mississippi, it may be seen how unfounded was the allegation that attributed to me any part in the legislative enactment known as the 'Act of Repudiation.' " ³

But the matter came very much to the front in 1844, when he was a candidate for Congress, and was used as a campaign attack. The *London Times* brought it well to the fore when it reprinted ⁴ the statement, which had been furnished by Mr. Davis to the *Washington Union* in February, 1849, in regard to the bonds. The statement doubtless presented his view.

Statement furnished by Jefferson Davis, Esq., Senator of the United States.

The State of Mississippi has no other question with bondholders than that of debt or no debt. When the United States Bank of Pennsylvania purchased what are known as the Union Bank bonds, it was within the power of every stockholder to learn that they had been issued in disregard of the Constitution of the State, whose faith they assumed to pledge. By the Constitution and the laws of Mississippi, any creditor of the State may bring suit against the State and test his claim as against an individual; but convinced that they have no valid claims they have not sought their remedy. Relying upon empty (because false) denunciation, they have made it a point of honour to show what can be shown by judicial investigation, i.e., that there being no debt, there has been no default. The crocodile tears which have been shed over ruined creditors are on a par with the baseless denunciations which have been heaped upon the State.

Those bonds were purchased by a bank then tottering to a fall—purchased in violation of the charter of the bank, or fraudulently, by concealing the transaction under the name of an individual, as may best suit those concerned—purchased in violation of the terms of the law under which the bonds were issued, and in disregard of the Constitution of Mississippi of which the law was an infraction. To sustain the credit of that rickety bank, the bonds were hypothecated abroad for interests on loans which could not be met as they came due. A smaller amount is due for what are termed Planters Bank Bonds of Mississippi. These evidences of debt as well as the coupons issued to cover accruing interest, are receivable for State lands; and no one has a right to assume that they will not be provided for otherwise, by or before the date at which the whole debt becomes due.

The *Times* dealt with the matter accordingly. Referring to the statement it said: "Taking its principles and its tone together, it is a document which has never been paralleled. Let it circulate throughout Europe that a member of the United States Senate, in 1849, has openly proclaimed that at a recent period the Governor and Legislative Assemblies of his own State deliberately issued fraudulent bonds for \$5,000,000 'to sustain the credit of a rickety bank'; that the bonds in question having been hypothecated abroad to innocent holders, such holders have not only no claim against the community by whose Executive and representations this act was committed, but that they are to be taunted for appealing to the verdict of the civilized world rather than to the judgment of the legal officers of the State by whose functionaries they have been already robbed; and that the ruin of toil-worn men, of widows, and of children and the 'crocodile tears' which that ruin has occasioned, is a subject of jest on the part of those by whom it has been accomplished, and then let it be asked if any foreigner ever penned a libel on the

American character equal to this against the people of Mississippi from their own Senator. Let it also be added that this Senator enjoys all the further advantages of social position which can be conferred upon his being a son-in-law of General Taylor, the President, and for the future let those statesmen who regard the honor of their common country, and who sometimes complain of harsh prejudices on this side, admit that in the face of such occurrences, so far from these prejudices being unnatural, the fact of their not being much stronger shows a disposition amongst us to place a far higher estimate on the integrity of the mass of the people than that which is accorded to them by some of their most prominent defenders."

It came to light again when Robert J. Walker, the Senator from Mississippi, whose vivid political career included becoming a strong anti-slavery man in 1861, and a staunch Lincoln Republican, was sent to London as a fiscal agent for the Federal Government. He was credited with having tried to fasten the repudiation matter upon Jefferson Davis, and of warning the *Times* and "its money-lending readers that they would lose their favorite Confederate bonds."⁵ Had the *Times* referred to its own files it might have found support for Mr. Walker's view, so far as it related to English bond holders.⁶ But at that time it had not made its second change to sympathy with the North. The historians of the South are agreed that Mr. Davis has been completely vindicated of the charge of being a repudiator, and at no time then or afterward was his personal integrity ever questioned.⁷

The young Democrat who made his entrance into political life with a week's speech-making as a candidate for the State House of Representatives was chosen in 1844 as one of the Presidential Electors of the State, and then made a tour

of the State campaigning for Polk and Dallas. The first railway in Mississippi had been built only four years before and ran from Vicksburg to Clinton, so campaigning was done on horseback or by horse and carriage, and the hospitality of gentlemen's houses rather than the doubtful inns on the way was accepted. This touring every county in the State brought candidate and voter together in this intimate way and fixed a relation that made for better political understanding. It proved so in Jefferson Davis' case. It brought even rival candidates together who frequently shared the same carriage, and stayed at the same houses. The strain of political difference would be lessened in social relation.

In another year he was elected to Congress and the planter at Brierfield had begun the long trail of public life that ended in Irwinsville twenty years later.

The Mississippians, it appears, felt that a new orator was among them. In the limits of political definition, the Democrats believed they saw material for a leader in this recently elected Congressman. It was then, rather as a matter of course, that he was chosen as the speaker of the evening to introduce Calhoun when, in the circuit of a tour the great Southern leader was making in the Southwest, he came to Vicksburg. It was only five years later that Calhoun was to say that his mantle would fall upon the shoulders of this young scholar-planter from Davis Bend. The night at Vicksburg as these two men appeared before their audience made up of Whigs and Democrats alike, the belief was that a greater democracy was to be abroad in the land, of which these speakers were fine examples. Whither it was leading no one was reckoning then. It was the beginning of a friendship that went on through years.

They were strangely similar, the older and the younger

man They were slim, rather slightly built, and tall. They were alert and moved rapidly. It was to be said of Davis later that he had a chin like Calhoun's—a firm, square chin. Mrs. Davis remembered Calhoun's hands as “nervous” and “gentlemanly.” Davis' hands were described as noticeable for their slender elegance.⁸ Both had a grave manner. Calhoun smiled but seldom, and Davis' aloofness was often noted. The marked difference was in their voices. Calhoun had no quality of music in his voice. Davis' voice was never without it. Calhoun talked upon the duty of a citizen to the State, a pleasant and familiar topic, and wholly sympathetic, to his hearers. And Davis went on record as urging a strict construction of the Constitution. What they did not talk about, these Democrats who were imperialists, was the idea that lay behind all plans for the country, an idea that was always in the mind of Calhoun and found ready agreement in that of Davis—that is, Empire which should extend the area of slavery.

The occasion brought out another fact. It was that the young orator would not again write out his speeches. The speech he had written was not the one he delivered. He was full of his subject, and the effort of remembering what he had written was more difficult than to pour out in his ready way the thing which must be said. Thereafter notes, such as he might make on small sheets of paper, names and dates, a few sentences, were all that he ever used. He had the orator's intuitive sense of when and by what he could hold his audience, and always the quality in his voice that kept attention, even above the meaning of the words. He had no need of written matter. He spoke rapidly, a trick he may have learned from Calhoun, and he could speak with fire, as

Congress was soon to know. The speeches of that evening at Vicksburg brought great applause.

The day after, Mr. and Mrs. Davis were on their way to Washington, and the public life of Jefferson Davis had begun. The journey took some three weeks. They were caught in an ice jam on the Ohio River, and peril and delay were part of the experience. The stage coach travel was over roads deep in snow, and accident and discomfort were incidents of it all. It was then that Varina Davis saw her husband as the soldier, the man who made light of these mishaps and hardships, and the rations, limited and poor. But Washington was reached at last, and they were soon established at the National Hotel in Pennsylvania Avenue, made of consequence since President Polk had stopped there at his Inauguration.⁹ Congress was to assemble in a few days.

When Mr. Davis took his seat in the Twenty-ninth Congress in December, 1845, it was under the ægis of an expansionist President. So was this young Congressman an expansionist—for the South. Before the month was out Texas had been incorporated into the Union and the Administration was free to take up the other campaign bait "54° 40' or Fight" and settle the Oregon boundary. Both of these expansion projects carried the threat of war, and one accomplished it.

It was on the question of the Oregon policy that the young Congressman from Mississippi made his first speech in Congress. He had previously introduced two resolutions, one, appropriately enough for this political soldier, asking to have the Committee on Military Affairs inquire into the expediency of converting a portion of the forts of the United States into schools for military instruction.

It was, in short, a form of preparedness and Mr. Davis

offered the resolution close to the moment when Texas became one of the twenty-eight States of the Union.

But the Oregon matter was the important one of the session and it brought out the oratory of the Southern members, some of whom had sat in the Twenty-eighth Congress, and all of whom were to be prominent in the road building to the Confederacy. There was the member from Georgia, Robert Toombs, with the head like Danton, perhaps with Stephens the most able of them all, who like Davis was a newcomer in the House. His maiden speech also was on this Oregon matter. There were William L. Yancey, of Alabama, whose idea of the Union was perpetual operation of "Southern rights"; Howell Cobb, so skilled as a parliamentarian as to make him the presiding officer of the Secession Convention at Montgomery, and the disappointed candidate for the Confederate Presidency; Alexander H. Stephens, the future Vice-President of the Confederacy; and the tailor from Tennessee, Andrew Johnson, picturesque and staunch in his support, at this time, of the South, who was destined in the years to come to share with Jefferson Davis the amazing charge of being implicated in the assassination of Lincoln. But the weakest link in the chain that forged the destiny of these two men was the general amnesty which Johnson as President issued in 1868 to all those who had taken part in the "treason against the United States, together with a restoration of all rights under the Constitution," for Jefferson Davis never took the oath of allegiance, nor did he accept the pardon. The rather childish story that the animosity which Johnson showed towards Jefferson Davis dated from a speech of the latter in this Twenty-ninth Congress is worthy of perpetuation only to show that if Andrew Johnson had to wait to be taught to write by his wife, he had learned

much from hearing read the speeches of British statesmen, and the later reading of them himself had taught him how to make ready response from the floor of Congress. It was toward the end of the Session in 1845, and Mr. Davis, in supporting some resolutions relative to operations at Matamoras, had protested against criticism of West Point and the Army which had been made previously by a Member from Ohio. He was able technically to point out that the skill there shown had "crumbled the stone walls of Matamoras to the ground," and he asked the Member "to say whether he believed a blacksmith or a tailor could have secured the same results." The Member from Ohio chanced to be a blacksmith, but took the allusion, made quite by chance, good-naturedly. The tailor from Tennessee, however, made it the opportunity of a stirring speech in which he spoke with pride of being a mechanic, "with a slur upon an 'illegitimate, swaggering, bastard, scrub aristocracy' and declared that 'when a blow was struck upon that class, either direct or by innuendo, from Whig or Democrat, he would resent it.' He summoned all history, sacred and profane, beginning with Adam, who (he said) was a tailor, to do honor to his class of mechanics."¹⁰ Mr. Davis disclaimed any intention of reflecting upon any class. He was simply attempting to show that war, like any knowledge, had to be taught. Both men later knew the full truth of that reply.

Other members in the House who formed the Southern group were R. Barnwell Rhett, of South Carolina, whose *Charleston Mercury*¹¹ tried to make political capital by declaring that the claim of the United States to the Oregon region was unsound, and R. M. T. Hunter, of Virginia, then in his thirty-sixth year, one of the three Commissioners in the after years appointed by Mr. Davis to the Hampton

Roads Peace Conference. These men, all in their young prime, were those who met to carry out in one way or another the expansionist principles which had elected the Democrat, Polk of Tennessee, to be President.

The fact that the annexation of Texas was sure to lead to war with Mexico was not unacceptable to the Southern leaders. Expansion in that direction was as it should be. Expansion in the direction of the Northwest, certain to threaten war with England, called for consideration and reflection. The Oregon trail had been a lure of some years, and the denizens of the covered wagons had gathered to such a number up through this wonder country that some form of government had to be devised the Federal Government would control. Organization of the country into a territory involved a settlement with England as to boundary since there had been the joint occupation from 1818.

In the early months of 1846 President Polk set about making good his somewhat hysterical declaration in his inaugural address of the year before that the American claim of Oregon was sound, thus clearly preparing for a straining of Anglo-American relations, for England was quite as sure of the justness of her claim. The treaty agreement of joint occupation pending the settlement of the claims had so far kept the peace. In the end the settlement was made at 49°, which had been refused by England three times when offered by John Quincy Adams.¹² But before this was accomplished the House learned of the views of the Member from Mississippi on expansion in the Southwest and Northwest and the bias of sectionalism. "Who are those," he asked, "that arraign the South, imputing to us motives of sectional aggrandizement? Generally, the same who resisted Texan annexation, and most eagerly press on the immediate occupation of

the whole of Oregon. The source is worthy the suspicion. These were the men whose constitutional scruples resisted the admission of a country gratuitously offered to us, but now look forward to gaining Canada by conquest. These are the same who claim a weight to balance Texas, while they attack others as governed by sectional considerations.”¹³ He recalled the phrasing of the campaign plank in regard to the reoccupation of Oregon, that it was the intention not to give immediate “notice” but “at the earliest practical period,”¹⁴ which carried with it the implication that the President would not, if authorized to give notice to England, do so until there had been some preparation for war. Again it was the soldier speaking, and he became the politician long enough to bring into his speech matter to satisfy his constituents, namely, that in the event of war, Mississippi as always would be ready for such an eventuality, a fact which actuated him “to oppose a policy that threatens an unnecessary war.”

So in this first speech the first traces of the Davis *credo* are found—expansion where the “peculiar institution” would flourish, and if a war was to be undertaken to prepare for it. Robert Toombs, whose speech on the Oregon question had preceded that of Davis by some days, had declared that looking at the problem as national rather than sectional, he thought the time had come to end the joint occupancy with England of Oregon, and he endorsed the President’s proposal of “adjustment on the basis of the 49th parallel.” As to the time of notice, he believed the matter lay in the President’s hands “since he was constitutionally charged with the conduct of foreign relations.” But in a letter to his friend, the Governor of Georgia, George W. Crawford, he expressed his views more frankly. “Notice will force an early settlement,” he wrote. “That settlement will be upon

or near the basis of 49° , and therefore a loss of half the country. . . . I don't [care] a fig about *any* of Oregon and would gladly get ridd [*sic*] of the controversy by giving it all to anybody else than the British if I could with honor. The country is too large now, and I don't want a foot of Oregon or an acre of any other country, especially," he thoughtfully added, "without 'niggers.'" ¹⁵ Honest Robert Toombs!

By April the active President felt the time had come to give "notice" to England that in a year joint occupancy of the Oregon country would cease. Another month saw the war with Mexico begun, which took up the interests of the jingoes, and by June the boundary settlement of the North country at 49° had been accomplished without war with England, and Canada was free to borrow the Psalmist's phrasing of dominion from sea to sea, and Mr. Polk had more leisure for Mexico and to get on with his Diary.

The stay at the National Hotel had not been long. Soon Mr. and Mrs. Davis were established in a boarding house as members of a "Congressional Mess," the customary residential method in Washington.

Davis had brought his scholar-planter ways with him from Brierfield, and spent much time in reading and studying. He often worked until two and three o'clock in the morning. The House had the benefit of this. When he spoke he was informed. The social life touched him very little. He was a man of ambition, and some thought it lay along Pennsylvania Avenue—to the other end. But whatever his ambitions he had the wisdom to know that growth comes with study, and the social life seemed of little consequence. Sometimes his wife thought he underestimated the impor-

tance of such a connection with people, and carried his aloofness too far for his own good.

He made his first impression upon the House with the Oregon speech, and a month later, in March, as a strict constructionist he opposed certain measures in the River and Harbor Bill, which, he thought, were devised for local rather than national benefit. He went on record with two very interesting statements. "I feel, sir," he replied to a Member, "I am incapable of sectional distinction upon such objects. I abhor and reject all interested combinations."¹⁶ Like all opinions these were subject to change.

The spring brought the recurring rumors of trouble on the Mexican border, and in May the President sent a message to Congress that a state of war existed with Mexico. The two men who had stood together on the platform at Vicksburg, the old Southern leader, Calhoun, and the man destined to be the new, Jefferson Davis, the one in the Senate, the other in the House, but with no collusion, the story runs, rose and each asked by what right the President took from the Congress its delegated authority to declare war. The President's message had said: "The cup of forbearance has been exhausted . . . After reiterated menaces, Mexico has passed the boundary of the United States, has invaded our territory and shed American blood upon the American soil. . . . War exists . . . and exists by the Act of Mexico herself."¹⁷

On April 6, 1917, when the cup of forbearance had for some time seemed exhausted to the American people, President Wilson addressed the Congress and made use of the important word "advise," thereby obviating such a question. "With a profound sense of the solemn and even tragical character of the step I am taking," he said, "and of the grave

responsibilities which it involves, but in unhesitating obedience to what I deem my constitutional duty, I *advise* that the Congress declare the recent course of the Imperial German Government to be, in fact, nothing less than war against the Government and people of the United States." Sixty-one years lay between the two speeches, but the Congress of 1846 in the end made the declaration as willingly as did that of the Congress of 1917, when the more tactful method of the then President had been employed.

In June Mr. Davis resigned his seat and laid aside the duties of a national politician. His State had asked him to command a regiment of Volunteers for service in Mexico. He was to be once again the soldier. When he returned to Washington it was as a Senator in the Thirtieth Congress.

THERE were stirrings of a foreign policy for the United States in the Presidential year of 1844, and expansion underlay the two main issues. The annexation of Texas would involve Mexico, French and English intervention were possible, and were the whole of the Oregon territory to be seized, thus breaking a common holding with England since 1818, war was inevitable.

In the spring of that year President Tyler's treaty of annexation with Texas was rejected by the Senate. The vote was 16 to 35, and Woodrow Wilson, the historian, wrote that "men of both parties alike [were] deeply irritated that the President should spring this weighty matter upon the country in such a fashion, taking no counsel beforehand save such as he chose to take."¹ Woodrow Wilson, the President, found it as a method no more acceptable to the American people.

But the political conventions of that summer made definite party alignments on the issue. The Whigs were silent, since they did not desire a war with Mexico. The Democrats had put the telling plank into their platform, "the reoccupation of Oregon and the reannexation of Texas at the earliest possible moment," the people were shouting "54° 40' or Fight!" and James K. Polk was elected. There was a happy indication of expansion westward and to the South in the telling phrase "manifest destiny," and it was supposed to indicate that the Union should reach the Isthmus. Their candidate's position on annexation at least was well known. Just previous to Mr. Polk's taking office, a joint resolution for the

annexation of Texas was adopted by Congress, on March 1, 1845. Mr. Tyler had had his way with the "little group of wilful men." But the margin was slight. In the Senate twenty-seven voted aye, and twenty-five nay.² In the House shortly after taking his seat, Mr. Davis had voted for annexation by this method of resolution by Congress rather than by treaty. Texas was annexed and the Mexican War followed. In the Oregon matter it was quite otherwise. Negotiations and quiet counsel prevailed, and the now famous "long, invisible border" was determined by the continuation at latitude 49° of Castlereagh's line,³ and there was no war with England.

But before this, expansion in one form or another was to be heard of many times in Congress and the market place, and across it like a long dark shadow was a corollary which was to be part of and run along with this desire for land. That fine delicate adjustment, which between nations is called balance of power, was to become in the Congress of the United States, when applied to slave-holding and non-slave-holding States, the germinating source of the "irrepressible conflict." There were the years between and Mr. Jefferson Davis had made a success of his first set speech in Congress on the Oregon question, thereby directing attention to himself as a Member, with a military record of leading a charge at Monterey and his famous reëntering angle at Buena Vista.

It was Mr. Buchanan's pleasant duty as Secretary of State in early September to inform the Hon. John Slidell, then in Congress as a Representative from Louisiana, that he was President Polk's choice as Special Ambassador to Mexico to smooth out such difficulties as had arisen inevitably after the annexation of Texas as well as those of a more remote origin. The mission was a highly delicate one. There were some

installments of money due the United States from Mexico for claims of American citizens against that country. These the United States would assume if the Ambassador were successful in negotiating concerning the boundary of Texas, that is, that it should reach to the Rio Grande; and would pay in cash a suitable equivalent.⁴ The advantage all lay with the United States, to be sure, but something had to be done to remove the idea from the Mexican mind that it would be possible to reconquer Texas, and from the minds of various European Powers that a monarchy could be set up in Mexico. Louis Napoleon was still a prisoner at Ham in the early months of 1846, though soon to make his escape and reach London. But it was to be some ten years before he was seriously reviewing with Disraeli the possibility of establishing perhaps a Bourbon monarchy there⁵ or of considering as the more likely candidate for Emperor the young Navy Archduke at Miramar.

But the gossip of the moment had it that the Spanish Prince Henry, son of Francisco de Paula, would be a satisfactory ruler.⁶ Further, at this time, the activity of the British and French agents was in full tide in their efforts to persuade Texas that if she would refuse annexation with the United States she could be assured that England and France would guarantee that Mexico would acknowledge her independence. It was one of those little matters where the idea of foreign intervention sometimes produces domestic solidarity. The people of Texas forced the assembling of the Convention, at Austin in July, and the ratification of annexation was secured.

Slidell was given highly discretionary powers, for the President had great faith in his abilities, but Mr. Buchanan assured him that a United States Naval vessel would always

be in the roadstead at Vera Cruz, waiting either for his dispatches or himself. Mexico was embarking on a customary revolution and a new government came into power, though not through the prescribed constitutional channels, which Slidell described as a "military despotism" with Paredes at its head; and then the question presented itself as to whether Slidell would be recognized by this *de facto* Government. If he were not, as was the case in the Government of Herrera, he would then return to the United States, and the President would recommend "energetic measures" against Mexico.⁷

This Mexican mission proved to be the first of Mr. Slidell's failures in such matters, but he seems rather to have made a success of a failure, if one thinks of the eventualities. Certainly it was a success so far as the policy of the Administration was concerned. The Paredes Government refused to receive him and in April he withdrew to New Orleans, whence he wrote his chief that the public generally would think him a failure as a diplomat, but not Mr. Buchanan nor "a discreet few," and that he would come to Washington at once "if the Secretary so desired."

Another observer for the United States had been engaged in military diplomacy during these months when Slidell was postured in Mexico awaiting recognition. Following upon the ratification of the Annexation of Texas by the Convention in July, the United States considered it only precautionary to place a small detachment of troops in Texas, and General Zachary Taylor with about fifteen hundred men was ordered to Corpus Christi. Later this force was augmented to about four thousand, for already Mexican troops were making demonstration towards the Rio Grande del Norte.

It was in the following March that General Taylor, by order of the President, advanced nearer to the Rio Grande through a country vivid in spring sunshine and gay with the blue lupine,⁸ marigolds, and verbena, and encamped opposite to Matamoras. A United States force was on the Mexican border. In fact, a Mexican authority, a Senator from the State of Jalisco, described General Taylor's force as "an army of observation," and further, which is perhaps more important, and more assuaging to those who wanted war, declared that Paredes' Government began hostilities.⁹ Mr. Polk was, however, having a long look to the westward and making suitable arrangements for dealing with California if the unfortunate thing of war with Mexico should occur. San Francisco was to be seized by the Pacific squadron, and approaches were to be made to California to come into the Union as a free and independent State, in the event of France or England attempting to claim the land. At the right time California made her choice, and made it as a Free State, which was a contributing factor in disarranging the balance of power between Free and Slave States. But in the meantime Frémont and his sixty-two riflemen did admirable exploration in Mexican territory and gave every evidence of "to have and to hold" under the blanket commission of an exploring expedition.

On the very day Mr. Polk was listening to Mr. Slidell's urgings to act against Mexico, word came of the killing and capture of some United States dragoons. A small group of Taylor's men—a scouting party—were seized by the Mexicans, and this together with Paredes' refusal to recognize Slidell gave Congress the desired opportunity in early May to declare that a state of war existed between the United States and Mexico. Seemingly Mr. Polk could come before

the country with a clear case. United States troops were holding land already part of the United States—that is, the Rio Grande was the old boundary which Texas claimed, and certainly territory belonging to the United States could not be invaded—and the only existing Government of Mexico had refused to recognize the special envoy who had been given power to negotiate these delicate matters of boundaries and make satisfactory adjustments. “War exists, and exists by the Act of Mexico herself,” said the President to Congress. Congress replied by voting ten million dollars and authorizing a call for fifty thousand troops, and three hundred thousand men answered. They remembered the Alamo and Goliad. And Jefferson Davis went into the Army again. The war was popular throughout the Southwest, where the idea of reveling in the halls of the Montezumas seemed more than a literary illusion. The dream of empire was never far away from these gentlemen warriors of the plantations.

“The dreadful call,” Mrs. Davis writes, came when a message was brought to Davis at Washington that he had been elected Colonel of a Mississippi regiment of volunteers organized at Vicksburg. It was the call of the soldier, and he at once set about securing proper arms and equipment before leaving Washington. Davis knew the type of men who made up the regiment. They were men of social importance, these privates, and they took their body servants with them.¹⁰ Men eager to fight, and to have as their Colonel one of the most popular men in the State. They were the Rough Riders of their day. They were used to long days in the saddle, riding over the plantations, hunters, and good shots all of them. It was this fact that caused Davis to wish to equip them with rifles, rather than the old-

fashioned flintlock musket long in use in the army. This suggestion brought the first collision with General Scott, who, however much his mind was occupied with his exceptional qualities for the Presidency, was primarily the trained soldier, and uniformity of equipment was a first essential. President Polk fairly if pompously recorded in his Diary that General Scott, whom he did not consider qualified in all respects, had been given the command of the Army to be raised for the War in Mexico because "his position entitled him to it if he desired it."¹¹ The old flintlock musket was in use in the Army. Better that than this untried percussion-rifle. He had first said four companies might have rifles, but in the end the whole regiment was equipped with them. The use they made of them caused to be written into the history of the State of Mississippi that "the charge of the Mississippi Rifle Regiment, without bayonets, upon Fort Tenería, gained for the State a triumph which stands unparalleled,"¹² and the regiment had a name, "The Mississippi Rifles," for all time.

The regiment left Vicksburg for New Orleans before Davis joined it. Congress was still in session, tariff considerations had followed upon the long debates over the Oregon question and the Mexican situation, and at the President's personal solicitation Davis was asked to remain until the passage of the tariff bill, promising that "the War Department would receive instructions to meet his requisitions."¹³ The Member from Mississippi had given a good accounting of himself in his one year in the Twenty-ninth Congress.

In June he left Washington, going first to his plantation at Brierfield before joining his regiment where it was encamped below New Orleans. On the journey down the river

he addressed his constituents in a letter to the Editor of the Vicksburg *Sentinel*, reviewing the year's work in the House of Representatives. He is on the steamer *The Star Spangled Banner*, and the address is full of patriotism. He recalls that the Oregon matter was adjusted without straining diplomacy too far, but in the case of Mexico it had been necessary to declare that a state of war existed. Texas had been invaded, and "the zeal shown in every quarter of the Union to engage in service of our common country furnishes just cause for patriotic pride and gratulation."¹⁴

He told his constituents of the importance of the tariff bill. Its main purpose was to "regulate anew the duties upon imports," in short, a tariff for revenue only, and it passed the House the evening before he left Washington and he "entertained no doubt of its passing through the Senate and becoming the law of the land." This was the famous Walker Tariff bill which passed the Senate by a single vote, and then only after long debate. The President had been doubtful of its passage, for, as he faithfully recorded in his Diary, "the city has been swarming with manufacturers who are making tremendous exertions to defeat it."¹⁵ The bill was said to have been largely written by the Secretary of the Treasury, Robert J. Walker, the man who drew the sinister circle around Davis' name in the matter of the repudiation of the Mississippi bonds, the while he himself, so some say, was the arch repudiator. Davis further assured his constituents that unless an early peace with Mexico ensued, so that he might continue to serve as their Representative in Congress, he would resign in ample time for them "to select a successor."

He joined the regiment near New Orleans, where it was embarked on the steamship *Alabama* for Point Isabel, Texas.

Here the regiment was in camp for several weeks, during which time the Colonel, having refreshed his West Point memory with a little volume on military tactics, put his men through the stiff training so acceptable to a Regular Army officer. The sun burned wicked heat on the men, the water was none too good, and in the three weeks' stay the sick list grew from day to day. But this training was soon to tell. By the middle of August they had moved up to the mouth of the Rio Grande, and there waited uncertain transportation to Camargo, where General Taylor had assembled his command of some 12,000 men with Monterey as the first objective.

It was in September, shortly after the Mississippi Rifles had reached Camargo, that, brigaded with the Tennesseans under Brigade Commander Quitman, they supported the regulars on the advance to the citadel at Monterey, where Colonel Davis gained for himself a record of personal bravery and military daring, and the regiment a reputation that was to be enhanced later at Buena Vista. There was the happy precedent for regiments from these States to be together in this war, for they had thus been under General Jackson before New Orleans.

General Ampudia found the morale of his officers and men low after the stubborn fighting of the Americans; there was a retreat of the Mexicans to Saltillo, the highway for their lines of communications cut off by some of General Worth's troops, and the time, so General Ampudia thought, had come for negotiation. He had heard, too, when these men of General Worth's had rushed headlong into the lower town, a cry that "began with a growl and rose to a falsetto scream," which in another war was to be known as the "rebel yell," and was to hearten men to great endeavor, but

whose echo has come down through the years to a whisper.¹⁶

General Ampudia sought and obtained a meeting with General Taylor, and the result of the negotiations was the appointment of a commission of three Mexicans and three Americans. Colonel Davis was one of these. An armistice was effected, with the capitulation of Monterey, which turned over the city, fortifications, munitions of war and all other public property to the commanding General of the United States forces, fixed a line beyond which the forces of the United States would not advance for a period of eight weeks, or until the Governments of both sides had been heard from, and provided that the Mexican forces were to retain the arms and accoutrements of the different branches of the service.¹⁷

These terms, when presented at Washington, were unacceptable to President Polk, his Cabinet and the politicians, many of whom believed General Taylor should have held to his crisp statement to General Ampudia—that he would accept only unconditional surrender. But the commissioners reasoned that a less harsh treatment now might prove of future benefit, and this was the view taken to the floor of the Senate during the discussion of the terms. The terms were declared unsatisfactory¹⁸ on the ground that they gave the Mexicans an opportunity to reorganize their Army for another attack, and General Taylor was sharply criticized. Colonel Davis at that time and later supported the General. He wrote: "As to the wisdom of the course adopted in this capitulation, men did, and probably will, differ. For myself, I approved it when it was done, and now, viewing it after the fact, I can see much to convince me in the view I originally took. We gained possession of a fort, large and well constructed. . . . We gained a large amount of powder and

fixed ammunition. Much of this was stored in the main cathedral, and the fire of our mortars directed against that building must have produced an explosion which would have destroyed the ammunition, a great number of houses which have been useful to us, and with the enemy's troops in the plaza, must have destroyed many of the advance of our own forces."

It was not the first instance of Davis praising the man who had been at one time his unwilling father-in-law. When the House on May 28, 1846, offered joint resolutions of thanks to General Taylor, Davis felicitously said:¹⁹

"The world held not a soldier better qualified for the services he was engaged in than General Taylor. Trained from his youth to arms, having spent the greater portion of his life on our frontier, his experience peculiarly fits him for the command he holds."

And later after his return from Buena Vista, when in the Senate²⁰ he had occasion to say, "Must President-making, too, be invoked in a resolution of thanks to gallant officers? If so, and if the great result which has been deprecated is to come, and the Army is to make your President, I would rather receive him from them than from the hands of fanatics. But there stands a soldier whose life has been wholly devoted to his country—whose services, accumulating one by one, have become a pyramid, as beautiful for its simplicity as it is sublime for its grandeur."

Before leaving Washington, Davis had asked the President that his regiment might be brigaded with General Taylor. The campaign days in the Black Hawk War were remembered, and the differences which arose over Davis' marriage with the General's daughter in some way reconciled. Their first meeting since the rupture seems to have

been on a steamboat on the Mississippi rather than here, in the sickly wastes of the chaparral-grown fields at Camargo, as legend has sought to prove.

Within a fortnight or so after the battle of Monterey, Colonel Davis asked for a furlough of sixty days to return to the United States. Such a practice was not unusual, and later in another war, notably after Antietam, officers and men alike sought permission to return home to arrange their affairs. Now his anxiety was for Mrs. Davis who was far from well, and in the interval of his absence many things on the plantation at Brierfield had suffered and were in need of his special attention. But in the two short weeks which his furlough gave him—the remainder of the sixty days was taken up in travel—not a great deal could be done. The short holiday was soon over, and by the 4th of January he had reached Saltillo and resumed his command.

After Monterey and its terms of capitulation it was believed that Mexicans would realize the determination of the United States and that the war would cease. The Commander-in-Chief of the Mexican Army, Santa Anna, thought otherwise, and made the bold gesture, in statement, that the banks of the Sabine River would be the place where he would dictate terms to the enemy.²¹ This same Santa Anna, who had occasion to remember San Jacinto and the soldier-statesman, General Sam Houston.

The armistice did not survive the indicated eight weeks. The United States determined that General Taylor should take the offensive, and make war so effectively that Mexico would desire peace. So General Taylor notified Santa Anna that his Government abrogated the armistice and that he would renew hostilities on the 15th of November. He then occupied Saltillo, the capital of the State of Coahuila.

It was at a hacienda called Buena Vista, about five miles from Saltillo, that in February of the next year Santa Anna's army made an attack where General Taylor's troops had the advantage of a defensive position. They had been materially reduced in number in order to supply needed troops to General Scott, who had arrived in Mexico with the purpose of setting out with an expeditionary force from Vera Cruz against the capital, Mexico City. It was here at Buena Vista that Colonel Davis made the stand that has become a commonplace of history.

West Point had occasion to feel its training stood the test. Davis met on the field not only some of his classmates, but other graduates of the Academy. The two Johnstons, Bragg, Lee, Hooker, Meade, Grant, McClellan, Jackson, Longstreet and Hancock were in the Mexican campaign. And even General Taylor had to forego his customary antipathy to the so-called aristocracy of the Military Academy, and accept the verdict that they were soldiers indeed. In his report of the battle of Buena Vista²² he took the opportunity specifically to note the Mississippi Rifles and their Colonel:

March 6, 1847.

The Mississippi Riflemen, under Colonel Davis, were highly conspicuous for gallantry and steadiness, and sustained throughout the engagement the reputation of veteran troops. Brought into action against an immensely superior force, they maintained themselves for a long time unsupported, and with heavy loss, and held an important part of the field until reinforced.

Colonel Davis, though severely wounded, remained in the saddle until the close of the action. His distinguished coolness and gallantry, and the heavy loss of his regiment on this day, entitle him to the particular notice of the Government.

This made Davis a military hero in the South at the time, and it was to be a springboard for his political rise. The Legislatures of several States passed resolutions in praise of his heroism and military skill, and no commendation was lacking for the regiment. It was called an "heroic stand" these Mississippi Rifles made against a terrific charge of the Mexican cavalry, and they and their gallant Colonel were the favorite toasts not only in their own State, but in the country as well for some time to come. The war generally was popular, except in some places in New England and in Louisiana, and in both these instances its unpopularity was for trade reasons.²³ It was a great moment for the Abolitionists to get into full cry—that the war with Mexico was "a war to strengthen the slave power." And the pack howled in its wonted way.

The Colonel received an ugly wound early in the charge. The ball that struck his right foot had driven bits of his brass spur into the flesh, and the pain was exquisite. But he writes Mrs. Davis with a soldier's simple statement, "I was wounded in the right foot, and remained on the field so long afterward that the wound has been painful, but is by no means dangerous."²⁴ As a matter of fact, he was on crutches for a year or two. It was one of those spectacular things about him that helped to dramatize him and that suited a military hero. General Scott had accomplished the march to Mexico City by September and it was in the following February that the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was concluded and Mexico gave up Texas to the Rio Grande boundary, and New Mexico, which at that time included Arizona and Upper California. The Gadsden purchase, which took in a further bit of Mexico and was made some five years later when Mr.

Davis was Secretary of War, was, in a way, another contribution of his to expansion.

Within a few months after the battle of Buena Vista, which had ended what was called the Rio Grande campaign, the Mississippi Rifles were ordered home. The period of enlistment which had been for a year only was now near its close. Upon reaching New Orleans the regiment was mustered out,²⁵ but it marched to Lafayette Square to receive the official welcome, where the eloquence of Sargeant S. Prentiss was declared never to have been surpassed, and the wounded Colonel made one of his graceful replies.

It was a bare four years since this soldier of Buena Vista had made his first political speech at Vicksburg in debate with this orator of the day here at New Orleans. There was now no debatable ground, the regiment had come back with all honors, and fine words could be used about its success. The regiment was paraded to the Place d'Armes, bright in its beauty of laurel and myrtle and jessamine, and cool in the shade of its orange and lemon trees. The river lipped along one side, on its way to the sea. The fine old Hotel de Ville with its gray stone and "deep worn door sills," and the old Spanish cathedral next it pointed up the beauty of the garden and made the background for the gay dresses of the ladies waiting to throw wreaths and flowers to the home-coming heroes. It was the Mississippi Rifles' hour, and their Colonel's.

Here at New Orleans, their Colonel, Jefferson Davis was to receive a new honor. President Polk wanted to recognize the services of the men who had distinguished themselves in the war, and he offered Davis a Commission as Brigadier-General in the Volunteer Army. The President had been recently authorized by Congress to make such

appointments. Such a bill had been introduced into the House before Mr. Davis had resigned his seat to go to the Mexican War, and he had intended to point out to his fellow members what he believed was an infraction of the Constitution, but he was called away from the Capital and in his short absence the bill had been passed.²⁸ The story of declining the promotion is always given as an instance of Mr. Davis' strict interpretation of the Constitution and the impression is left that the President strained his authority. He was merely acting upon the authority given him by Mr. Davis' fellow Members of Congress. Davis, however, returned the Commission to the President and respectfully declined it. The President, in the Colonel's opinion, had exceeded his power. State Rights were supreme. The Constitution was very specific in Article I, Section 8, that such an honor could come only from the State. In offering this promotion to Colonel Davis the President put aside his own wish to appoint a personal friend, for he believed that failure to give the place to the popular Colonel "who behaved most gallantly at Monterey and Buena Vista" would have aroused general dissatisfaction.

The following day the regiment began its triumphal way up the river. At last Vicksburg, and Mrs. Davis could write "the journey was one long ovation." Another day found them at Brierfield to renew the old life, where the Colonel could rest more easily from his wound. The active soldier days of Jefferson Davis were at an end. His emergence from the quiet ways at Brierfield was again as a politician.

THE roses at Brierfield bloomed on, and there in the garden among them, and in the peaceful ways of plantation life, Davis, the political soldier, waited his next summons to duty. It came in a few months; when the Thirtieth Congress assembled in December, and Davis took his seat as Senator. The Governor of Mississippi, Albert G. Brown, had recognized the military honor Jefferson Davis had brought to the State in the Mexican campaign, and appointed him to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Senator Jesse Speight. The letter from the Governor which offered him the appointment referred to the high services Jefferson Davis had rendered the country as a Member of the Twenty-ninth Congress. In his reply Davis is the politician:

The approbation which you convey of my services in the Twenty-ninth Congress is especially pleasing, because therein was manifested my fixed opinion on the taxing and expending powers of the Federal Government, my uniformly entertained and often avowed creed of strict construction of the Constitution of our Union. . . . You have justly anticipated my views in relation to a peace with Mexico, an event to be desired not merely from its influence on our domestic policy, but also to save from monarchical alliance, or entire prostration, a republic confederacy, which despite our caution and magnanimous forbearance has forced us into war.¹

President Polk himself could have done no better. The last paragraph is indeed rather reminiscent of the President's war message.

The Legislature of the State was proud to ratify unanimously his nomination. The next stepping stone had been placed in the political rise of Jefferson Davis.

It was at a time when to be in the United States Senate was an honor indeed; and reckoned to be one of the highest to be attained in the country. It was the goal for most men politically minded, and to achieve it at the age of thirty-nine was a distinction. So, once again, Jefferson Davis and his wife drove away when the wild geese and wild ducks were flying, and traveled by boat and stage coach the familiar route to Washington, and Brierfield was left in the burnishing sun of autumn days. The soldier was become again the politician.

The tall, slight, austere man who made his entrance into the Senate on crutches, recalled to his colleagues that he had carried his principles to Mexico. In the debates that were to follow on this newly acquired land for the United States, the Senator from Mississippi showed he had brought them back with him. He was little above medium height, but he appeared as rather a tall man. The figure once robust was now slim, and this leanness was in his face as well. The high forehead and straight nose gave a length and sharpness to his face, which was always marked with the intensity of his expression. The thin lips could be drawn into an almost straight line when his sensitiveness was touched. His eyes were clear, for his mind was alert. His austerity kept warmth of expression out of them except to his family, where it never was lacking. He had, in general, the characteristics of the Norman type. He was a distinguished figure among a group of distinguished men, and in time "men waited his nod of approval." Vice-President Dallas was something of a perfectionist and wore his spotless white cravat with the same

care he sealed his graceful notes and presided over the Senate. And the whole body took the matter of dress as a mark of respect, as did the Supreme Court Justices their gowns. The older members wore silk stockings and low shoes, and all the members some sort of full dress.² The Senate of the United States had a dignity of its own to maintain.

The young Senator from Mississippi felt himself quite at home among the elder statesmen, and they very shortly made recognition of his coming by appointing him to the Committees on Military Affairs and Pensions. He was also on the Library Committee. The scholarly ways of the Senator had become known as well as his military knowledge. It was the scholar who advocated the plan of Monsieur Vattermare, who at this time was engaged in furthering an international Exchange of the World's Literature, a scheme rather similar to that of the League of Nations Committee on Intellectual Coöperation. Mr. Davis was also made a Regent of the Smithsonian Institution, of whom three only are chosen from the Senate. He seems to have made little mark there, for the records of that Institution are singularly barren of any constructive contribution which he made, but it always claimed his interest. His real contribution was when in the House he voted to accept the gift of Smithson, the Englishman, which founded the Institution, for some of the Members were doubtful if the Government could receive funds from a foreign source. He further urged that there should be no restrictions on students and that all courses at the Institution be thrown open to them. He maintained that lectures—he was indeed the torch bearer for this basic American pastime—were the greatest means of extending knowledge that had been devised in modern times, second only to the invention of the art of printing.³



DAVIS, THE SENATOR

He was "a working member" in the Senate as he had been in the House, and this in spite of his health, which then and throughout the remainder of his life was pitifully inadequate for the demands upon it. A highly sensitized neurasthenic, he suffered again and again with neuralgia that practically blinded one eye. Often he would come into the Senate with bandaged eye, and as often would be unable to leave his house for weeks at a time, worn with pain. Eventually he lost the sight of one eye. But an indomitable will put even this limitation aside. It was a misfortune, it will be recalled, that President Wilson narrowly escaped.

Here in the Senate as in the House, Davis' dream of empire went on and slavery made the links for the chain. Some plans of a statesman would have their beginning in his active mind. The means of accomplishment were never quite realities to him. It was why he failed as an administrator when he became an executive. One of his early problems was to devise a plan in palatable form that would secure the support of the North in rearranging the acquired land so as to keep the balance of power still in the hands of the South. South Carolina was having one of her determined attacks of secession and neither vision nor political expediency made her a supporter of the Administration. Davis then sought Lewis Cass, whose home State, Michigan, Janus-like, faced "the North" and, more significantly, the Northwest. It was a shrewd move to interest the Democracy of the North. In the intervals of waving his large palm-leaf fan, the largest Mrs. Davis said she had ever seen, Cass had put himself on record in the Senate as an expansionist, and in the following year was to receive the Democratic nomination for President. He was called a "dough face," or "a Northern Man with Southern Principles," as were all North-

ern Democrats who voted against the Wilmot Proviso. His principles exactly suited Mr. Davis. They were both on the Committee on Military Affairs, and it was Senator Cass who introduced the measure known as the Ten Regiments Bill, intended to add new regiments to the Regular Army, largely as a matter of security for policing the new territory which under the banner of "manifest destiny" was to reach to the Pacific. The Senator from Mississippi supported this bill and at this time advocated an interesting theory: All military matters of whatever sort should be left with the President and his advisers. It was a theory he saw no reason to change between 1861-1865.

But his preoccupation in the next few years till he resigned from the Senate to run for the Governorship of Mississippi was in expansion in all its forms. A canal across Nicaragua, a railway to the Pacific, which should have its start for the coast at some point near Vicksburg and thus secure an outlet, in addition to the great river's way to the Gulf, for the development the Lower South was certain to have. He represented the young South and in the hopes and beliefs it had in the yields of its lands. "The very necessity of defending the United States requires that we should take whatsoever should be necessary always to secure the great point of exit and entrance to a large portion of the American coast," [the Gulf of Mexico] was the way he took to state his view.⁴ It was so he felt about the tideless sea that is the power of the Mississippi Valley. It was so Admiral Mahan thought and wrote some forty years later, when he said that "when Panama was opened the Mississippi Valley would, in case of war involving the Canal, become the base of operations and the main effort of the country must pour down that valley." And more recently it was said, "The Mississippi

Valley . . . is rapidly taking its place as the seat of the Empire of America.”⁵

The “peculiar institution” had its set-back from a Pennsylvania Congressman, and one reason at least related to the Mexican War was driven sharply to the fore in Congressional debates. It formed, too, the great approach to the fateful years of 1850 to 1860, in which Mr. Davis made one volte-face, which is always permissible to a politician, and South Carolina deferred her secession plan to the end of the decade.

The vast reaches of Texas had brought new wealth to the slave-holding States and new hope for the extension of slave territory with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. This had been disturbed, however, by the Wilmot Proviso, and was further disarranged when California brushed aside as unworthy of its man’s stature the adolescence of a territory, and declared itself a State, and ready to enter the Union as such. California’s great year, 1849, that had seemed to make it the end of all the rainbows, had given it an amazing population who knew what they wanted, especially when helped to the idea by the President, Zachary Taylor. If “Old Rough and Ready” did not have the honor of taking the United States troops into the city of Mexico, he took the White House at Washington by the will of the people but held it barely fourteen months, his death occurring in July, 1850. He it was who realized that if California came into the Union as a State, the territorial existence with its slavery problem would be avoided. California’s unpardonable sin was that her constitution prohibited slavery.

The Senator from Mississippi had had his expansionist eye to the Northwest and made a political record in his speeches during the debate on admitting Oregon to the

Union, as he had when he spoke in the House on the Oregon boundary. He declared that no Southern Senator had ever asked for the introduction of slavery into Oregon. He added an amendment that the act should not be construed so as to authorize the prohibition of slavery in the territory while it should remain a territory, and thus Mr. Davis had raised his colors. The Senator from Illinois, who was to specialize in territory making and thereby derive a name for himself as "Little Giant," had previously introduced the bill for the organization of Oregon as a territory with that strange notion of self-determination in its make-up. The territories should decide for themselves by popular vote on their institutions. This gave Jefferson Davis his opportunity for the speech that nailed his thesis on the door of the Senate, and the later opportunity to introduce his amendment. There was a long and stirring speech upon the "peculiar institution." It was all indicative of the slowly rising tide that was to be at the full in the Thirty-first Congress with the impassioned plea of Henry Clay. At the moment the free and slave States were evenly represented in the Senate. There were thirty Senators from each.⁶ But the little rival annoyances of economic gain were pointing to a greater future, and pride of locality began to push principles, North and South.

Day after day, undaunted by time, the debates went on as to the disposition of New Mexico and Utah in territorial organization, for the California arrangement had brought the sectional problem to the point where disunion as a solution was highly praised. Here to the Southwest lay this great land that still carried the glamor of Spanish glory and conquest. A part had been lost, in the mind of the South, when California prohibited slavery. The remaining portion, for

balance of power reasons, should be open to slavery. The leaders of the South knew that the type of civilization to which they belonged would prosper there, but there was this point; as having been a part of Mexico, slavery did not exist there, since Mexico, years back, had abolished slavery. Therefore, the plan was being developed to make a section of New Mexico become a portion of Texas, and thus automatically be a slave State, one of six which the Southern States sculptors fancied might be carved out of the great territory. These, together with the activities of the Abolitionists who long since had advocated disunion, brought all aspects of the "peculiar institution" to the bitter climax of 1850.

When Congress opened in December, 1849, there was continued interest in the Senator from Mississippi. The month of January was a period of advice bestowed upon Congress in regard to slavery, until Henry Clay introduced the famous bill that crystallized the form of attack; and days were to go into weeks and weeks into months while the welter of oratory settled around the admission at once of California, the creating of territories out of New Mexico and Utah with no mention of slavery, a stiffer fugitive slave law, as conciliating the South, and the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. The Nashville Convention that was to meet to consolidate Southern opinion and coördinate Southern policies⁷ under the whip lash of Calhoun, adjourned with little more done than the dead master's indication that Davis would be "the future leader of the South."⁸

Mississippi was not ready for secession, nor were the other States whose delegates had met for the Convention, and beyond advocating the extension of the old Missouri Compromise line at 36°30" to the Pacific, the Convention ad-

journed and there was no solid South for secession at that time. It was because such was the fact that the Compromise measures were passed in September and there was a lull till the elections the next year showed the cleavage in the South.

The hour for the compromise of 1850 was at hand, and oratory reached its zenith in the Senate, with Henry Clay offering compromise and Calhoun hearing his last speech, admitting of no compromise, read by James M. Mason, later of *Trent* fame—he was too feeble to deliver it, with death only days away—and Webster making his last speech in the Senate that envisioned only a whole country. The Senator from New York, Mr. Seward, was perhaps too close to his colleagues for a clear perspective. He thought Calhoun the “most eminent of the three,” but that they were all “over-rated men.” Calhoun had undirected original eloquence, he thought. Clay a fiery, brilliant imagination; Webster, brute intellectual force; Calhoun’s logic was not sound; he led and did not follow it,⁹ were his estimates of these men whom he regarded as “over-rated.” He was young at the time of the Compromise speeches, only in his forty-ninth year, and although he had been Governor of New York State, he had as yet made no reputation in Washington. Three years later the observing Miss Bremer noted in her letters that “the Senator from New York . . . is a little man, not at all handsome.”¹⁰ He himself was acquiring a name at this time of “Higher Law Seward”¹¹ for while admitting that Congress could, by constitutional right, establish slavery in the territories, “there is a higher law than the *Constitution* which regulates our authority over the domain,” he declared. He would have invoked it against the Fugitive Slave Bill. The idea and the phrase passed into history along with some of those of the “over-rated men.” All did not then and

have not since shared this view of Mr. Seward's in regard to his colleagues. A Member of Congress, who served only one term, "because there was no movement to reelect him,"¹² Abraham Lincoln, thought otherwise of them. He knew and followed all their utterances, and some of the newcomers in the Senate—Douglas, and this Higher Law Seward and Jefferson Davis—were having things to say he wanted to read.

Part of the time that Lincoln was in the House, Davis was in the Senate, but they seem never to have met. Many years later, just a year or two before his death in fact, the Philadelphia *Inquirer* asked Mr. Davis to write an article on Lincoln, and at his own price. This he declined to do. "It is curious," he said to the representative of the paper, who sought to get the article, "that I never met Mr. Lincoln, nor do I remember ever seeing him. I resigned from the House to go to Mexico in 1846, and Mr. Lincoln did not take his seat in that body till later. When I returned to Washington in 1847, as Senator from Mississippi, I do not remember to have seen Mr. Lincoln whose term expired in 1849." He then spoke of Douglas. "Douglas," he continued, "more than once after his opponent had become prominent, tried to recall him to my memory, but he never could succeed in doing so."¹³ Davis may have recalled, even if he never saw him, that Lincoln came into notice in the House as opposing the Mexican War. That, at the time, would have made Lincoln unimportant to him, if nothing else. There seems to be on record, however, an occasion when he could scarcely have failed to see Lincoln. It was shortly after Zachary Taylor's nomination for the presidency that a dinner was given to Senator Crittenden, who had resigned from the Senate to run for the Governorship of Kentucky on the Whig ticket. The invitations were issued by thirty-four Senators,

including the names of Webster, Calhoun, and Davis, and some sixty-five Representatives, among whom were Toombs, Stephens and Lincoln. At the banquet, where every Senator was present and a large number of members from the House, many speeches were made, one of them by Lincoln, and another by Jefferson Davis, who responded to the toast to the American Army.¹⁴ The banquet took place on the 7th of September, 1848; and "the gallant Senator from Mississippi," a war hero, and son-in-law of General Taylor's, was undoubtedly the one to call upon for the toast to the Army. But Mr. Davis was often asked to make speeches when "Old Rough and Ready" was to be honored. At the time of his inauguration Davis was the chairman of the Committee on Arrangements, and also was on the Senate Committee to notify him and the Vice-President, Millard Fillmore, of their elections. It might easily have slipped his memory that one of the speakers on this particular occasion was the then little-known and unimportant Illinois politician, Abraham Lincoln.

Lincoln also during this term had introduced a bill "for the gradual and compensated extinction of slavery in the District of Columbia." He therefore followed with interest the debates in both House and Senate in the year of the Compromise that surged around Clay's bill,¹⁵ with its clause on abolition of slaves in the District.

It was in this same winter that Davis made his Compromise speech which was followed by Lincoln and by others who found in it the clear statement of the Southern position. It was scarcely more than a fortnight before that Calhoun's, Clay's and Webster's speeches had thrilled the country. It was the speech that is quoted to show that in this great struggle Davis was representing the New South—that is, he was a

Secessionist, but only as a last resort, if not of the most radical group. He had no difficulty in fixing the source of the trouble. It came from the North. "Northern attempts to degrade us in the eyes of Christendom . . . Northern organizations formed expressly for the purpose of hostility to the South. . . . The South looked forward to the day when the power to remodel the Constitution, being possessed, will be exercised by the North and slavery abolished." That was the intention of the North and what it would do in the end. "The Federal Government was but the agent of all the States" ¹⁶—this was to be said again and again until its notion was lodged in the preamble of the Constitution of the Confederate States, made at Montgomery, but always acceptable Southern doctrine. He passed to an interesting suggestion which was that what would secure a proper balance of power would be to have the North control one House of Congress and the South the other. He does not, however, explain how he would arrange the choice. He declares himself to be against compromise legislation in any of its forms, and it seems difficult to discover how what he calls this ideal division could have been achieved without compromise. He does, however, include in his speech a statement as pertinent to-day as when he made it nearly seventy years ago. It was on the proposed Fugitive Slave Law, which he said would come to nothing. "No act of Congress could be enforced in any State," he said, "if public opinion was against it."

The Compromise Bill passed in the autumn, and a delusion was abroad in the land that sectionalism, like a fine piece of steel, had been bent but not broken. John Morley's book *On Compromise* was not written until many years later. Had it been, and known to the members of the Congress, there might have been less security in the belief that compromise

achieved a permanent end. Davis declared himself to be no believer in compromise in any form. When the Compromise Bill was passed in September, the rumors of secession had not ceased. Those went on for some time longer, fanned by the efforts of three extremists—Quitman (Davis and he had studied Spanish together as boys); Yancey, always the sure fire orator of the Southwest, and Rhett, with his *Charleston Mercury* to disseminate opinions, formed a partnership for the promotion of a Southern Rights Party, and secession was its foundation. And there was rumor that such a Confederacy might place Davis at the head as President.¹⁷ The subject was kept well in the public mind, but the Southern Whigs were strong enough to prevent disunion when such men as Toombs and Stephens and Cobb were organizing Union opinion through new party alignments. A *Constitutional Union Party* was their hope, which should "destroy abolitionism at the North and disunion at the South."¹⁸ It was a handsome hope at least. In November of this year Davis made a searching reply to a group of Union gentlemen who asked him whether he was in favor of dissolution of the Union. His answer was not such as he was to make ten years later:

"If any have falsely and against the evidence before them," he said, "attempted to fix on me the charge of wishing to dissolve the Union *under existing circumstances*,"¹⁹ I am sure your information and intelligence have enabled you to detect the hollow fraud. If any have represented me as seeking to establish a Southern Confederacy on the ruins of that which our revolutionary forefathers bequeathed to us, my whole life and every sentence I have uttered in public or private give them lie. If any have supposed gratuitously (they could not otherwise) that my efforts in the Senate were

directed to the secession of Mississippi from the Union, their hearts must have been insensible to the obligations of honor and good faith which I feel are imposed upon me by the position of an accredited agent of the Federal Government.”²⁰ The following year the Legislature of Mississippi reelected him to succeed himself for the full term. He had satisfied his constituents. It was the office which he preferred to all others,²¹ and he was to be six years longer at Washington.

As the young Senator from Mississippi looked back over the year in the Senate it was with a feeling of bitter disappointment. He had opposed with all his force the Compromise measures. Had President Taylor lived, his son-in-law's oratory together with his own doubt of the bill might have affected its course. Impassioned oratory had not saved the day. It was through these debates that the rather arrogant, austere man began to show some of the qualities the South was to know in the years at Richmond. He recognized no position other than his own. And his coldness and aloofness made sharp contrast with the coarse and rather vulgar Foote. This little wiry man who was so quick with his fiery interruptions and observations could be cool and calculating when he sought effect, and he lost no opportunity to attack Davis. He was one of the few Senators Miss Bremer singled out in her praise of the Senate²² which she thought comprised men of greater talent than could be found in any other country. Then the ways of politics made a strange move in Mississippi, and in the following year, 1851, Foote became the Whig nominee for Governor, since for reasons of his own he had approved the Compromise measure.

The campaign had been an interesting one and was a reflex of the struggle over the Compromise of 1850. It repre-

sented a sharp cleavage on the notion of secession, the Whigs nominating Foote, the Unionist, and the Democrats renominating General John A. Quitman, in part as a gesture of confidence. General Quitman had resigned as Governor to meet a Federal charge which implicated him with coöperating in a filibustering expedition to Cuba, a charge from which he was acquitted. He too had a Mexican War aura, and was popular as well, but his politics were those leading to Southern independence and he was nominated on a platform against the Compromise; that is, a definite States Rights and slavery platform. The whole country was aroused on these questions and Mississippi had arranged a special election for the delegates to the convention at Nashville, which was to be represented by all the Southern States. Its purpose was to place Mississippi's attitude to the Union in clearly defined lines. How were "the encroachments from the North," about which General Taylor had written Davis the year before, to be met unless countered by self-determination in the South? In this election of the delegates a shifting of party alignments sharply indicated the trend of opinion. Disunion was not to be threatened but some compromise or "accommodation" made. The State Democracy was defeated so overwhelmingly that Quitman's defeat was sure to follow in the gubernatorial election and the Committee asked him to withdraw.

When Congress adjourned in 1851 the Davises returned to Mississippi, stopping at Jackson, where they were the guests of the city,²³ and making a round of visits before going to Brierfield. Their popularity had never seemed greater. It was natural to turn to Mississippi's handsome Senator to help the State and ask him to replace Quitman as nominee for the Governorship.

There had been murmurings of his suitability for the

Presidency. The office of Governor made an effective asset towards that end. It is possible such thoughts were in his own mind. A man holding the high office of Senator, just entering for the full term and but recently reëlected under flattering circumstances, would scarcely put it aside for the Governorship of his State were there not some chance that the State road would merge into the National highway. When the Executive Committee of the party asked him to take General Quitman's place, he consented on the understanding that he would not have to take part in an active campaign. He at once resigned from the Senate. His health, as was so often the case, was far from good, and he had thought himself unable to leave home. "Nevertheless," he says, "I soon afterward took the field in person, and worked earnestly until the day of election. I was defeated; but the majority of more than seven thousand votes, that had been cast a short time before against the party with which I was associated, was reduced to less than one thousand."²⁴ It was thus he explained the campaign which he had carried on in every county in the State. That the people of the State should fail him was a surprise indeed—especially since the successful candidate for the Governorship was Mississippi's other Senator. Davis had believed himself to be the spokesman of his State, and rather arrogantly wanted it understood that such was the fact. But Foote on the floor of the Senate had told him it was quite otherwise. From the safe position as Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations in the Senate, he had taunted Davis as not representing the views of the people of the State, and he hated Davis. Davis had taken his position bulwarked with his membership of the Committee on Military Affairs. But the enmity was one of long standing, dating back to an affray at a "Congressional

Mess," in Washington, which, however, did not reach the dignity of a duel but was settled by blows.

Following the practice of the time, Mr. Davis upon occasions did appear as a duelist, at least as a potential duelist. When the debates on the Fugitive Slave Law were putting fire under Congress, Bissell of Illinois denied that the Mississippi Rifles had saved the day at Buena Vista. As Colonel of that regiment Davis promptly demanded a retraction. Bissell refused, and on February 27, 1850, Davis challenged him, and he accepted at once. Through the good offices of General Taylor and Colonel Bliss, Davis' father- and brother-in-law, the duelists were reconciled, for it was found, most happily, that they were not referring to the same part of the battle.²⁵ The challenge of his later greatly admired Secretary of State took place when both were Senators in 1858, and Benjamin resented a statement of Davis. The procedure was exemplary. Mr. Davis tore up the note of challenge brought by Senator Bayard of Delaware and rose in the Senate and made full retraction.²⁶ In one instance he had displayed physical courage, in another moral, and in the third it appeared to be a draw. It was all in the manner of the period.

But this campaign for the Governorship closed with no untoward events. Davis was an interesting personality as a campaigner, and usually an effective one. His physical condition often appealed to his public. He had first entered the Senate Chamber on crutches, pale and worn from the effects of his wound at Buena Vista. Now he made this campaign with bandaged eye, unable to endure the light, suffering from exposure to the sun. He was a dramatic figure. But the sacrifice he had made was unavailing. Mississippi had accepted the Compromise. And Mr. Davis was again among his roses, "a stranded politician."

WORKING in his garden at Brierfield among its roses and flowering shrubs was the occupation Davis set himself in the days following his defeat for the Governorship of Mississippi in 1851. Mississippi had failed him. It was, however, one of the two honors she ever withheld from him.

The old plantation life became at once a solace. There were long days spent in riding through the dense growth of the live-oaks hung with moss that the light winds drifting through the blossom-filled air kept in slow rhythmic motion; days spent in directing the care of the plum and apple orchards or the work in the cotton fields, for the rich bottom lands had brought a fine yield; and always there was the garden. Here Davis and his wife passed hour after hour planting the seeds and shrubs that had been sent from the near-by towns, as well as from Europe.¹ A sense of leisured peace came to them in these quiet ways and the new house more and more meant to them home. The house was in no sense a mansion—the New Orleans builders would seem not to have been either imaginative or artistic or else were curbed by the owner. It was rather a sublimated type of bungalow with wings on either side set back, and wide galleries with pillars, before the three fronts. But it was built for such cool airs as came from the river, and wide high windows gave on the galleries. There were white marble mantels, doubtless a New Orleans importation, and other handsome furnishings, but nothing was pretentious about the place in any way. The real beauty lay out towards the river, which

brought and carried by its own beauties—leaving its sloughs, and bayous, rich havens for the blue and white heron, and the wild ducks, and the other creatures of these still waters.

There were occasional visitors, the mail came only twice a week; the market town, Vicksburg, was some thirty-six miles away. There was little to disturb this quiet routine that was grateful after the strain of the Washington life and the fatigues of a campaign. Here for the next two years they had the seclusion and satisfaction of private life. A son, their first child, was born to them here. Brierfield had taken on an even happier meaning to them as home.

But before this a Presidential campaign had come on, and inevitably Davis had been drawn into it.

In the summer of 1852 he had written a letter to Senator James A. Pearce of Maryland which in a measure squares his change of view in regard to the Compromise from that of the previous year:

If I know myself, you do me justice in supposing my efforts in the session of 1850 were directed to the maintenance of our constitutional rights as members of the Union, and that I did not sympathize with those who desired the dissolution of the Union. After my return to Mississippi in 1851, I took ground against the policy of secession, and drew the resolution, adopted by the democratic *State Rights* convention of June, 1851, which declared that secession was the last alternative, the final remedy, and should not be resorted to under existing circumstances. I thought the State should solemnly set the seal of her disapprobation on some of the measures of the "Compromise."

When a member of the United States Senate, I opposed them because I thought them wrong and of dangerous tendency, and also because the people in every form, and the legislature by resolutions of instructions, required me to oppose them. But indiscreet men went too fast and too far;

the public became alarmed; and the reaction corresponded with the action, extreme in both instances. The most curious and suggestive feature in the case is the fact that those who were originally foremost in the movement were the beneficiaries of the reaction.²

But Davis was the politician, his State had declared itself for the Compromise, he found himself able to adjust his convictions of the year previous, and he accepted his party's mandate. Then began a round of speech-making throughout his own and the neighboring States.

The choice of the Democrats had fallen upon Franklin Pierce of New Hampshire. As a native son, the Legislature of New Hampshire had thought him the suitable candidate for the presidency, and had even proposed his name as early as January of that year. But it was the Virginians who named him at the Democratic National Convention at Baltimore in June, 1852, after the usual number of balloting to which that city has been so accustomed in these conventions, and he was nominated on the thirty-fifth ballot. The more prominent party leaders for one reason or another were put aside—Cass of Michigan for one; Buchanan was to go over for four years; Douglas had not yet declared for "popular sovereignty"; and Marcy, although well to the fore as a candidate, was to be passed over. The youngest man yet to be nominated for the high office of President was a safe choice, and it was a Southern delegation that led the stampede for Pierce.

General Scott, by patient effort and peculiar insistence, had received the nomination of the Whig Party, and derived such comfort as he could between the nomination and his overwhelming defeat in November. All the States but four—Massachusetts, Vermont, Tennessee and Kentucky—were

carried by Pierce, and General Scott had opportunity to reflect that military achievement, the path of duty, did not inevitably secure presidential preferment, the way to glory. It gave him more leisure and point to carry on a sharp correspondence in regard to accounting and other military details with Jefferson Davis when he became Secretary of War.

The Free-Soilers had presented their candidate for the second time, on the platform, "No more Slave States, no more Slave territories, no nationalized slavery, no national legislation for the extradition of slaves." But comprehensive as that was, out of the more than four million votes cast they polled only 156,000.

The platform of the Democratic party with which Jefferson Davis allied himself stood for the Compromise and adopted "the principles laid down in the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions of 1798 and 1799, and the Report of Mr. Madison to the Virginia Legislature in 1799." These principles were to be adhered to "in their obvious meaning and import,"³ not only then, but on through the fateful years to the breaking point in '61. They had become the breviary of every Southern statesman.

The Whigs, with General Scott, supported the Compromises, and that meant the Fugitive Slave Law—as well.

The general disposition was to avoid a renewal of the bitter debates over the slavery question, and the little known Mr. Pierce, who had made an unobtrusive entrance into Congress both in the House and in the Senate, but had resigned his seat and withdrawn to the cloistered way of law practice in New Hampshire, carried the Democratic party to a spectacular victory, and it was believed that sectional differences were composed. In such calm Pierce selected his Cabinet, and invited Davis to a place in it. Davis had made

many speeches throughout the campaign for Pierce. He was accustoming himself to speak with his party rather than on the view he had so recently held.

The meeting at the "Congressional Mess" in Washington some years before, where Davis was a guest and Pierce a member, doubtless came to the President's mind. How he had been ready to present this handsome young Lieutenant Davis, as he was then, with his good manners and acceptable address, to the President; how Mr. Van Buren, who within a few short years was to be called "the Northern man with Southern principles," found the young Lieutenant agreeable and informed. The President had admired Mr. Davis' shoes, and was interested to learn they were made in New Orleans. The conversation lengthened. The President asked Davis to remain for breakfast. Since that time Davis had gained a national reputation, and President Pierce in inviting him to the Cabinet was bringing a man of distinction into his official family. But the invitation was declined for "private and personal reasons."⁴ The life at Brierfield at this time was more engrossing than politics.

However, Davis did accept Pierce's invitation to his Inauguration. Once back in the capital, the old lure of official life asserted itself, and Davis found he could listen receptively to Pierce's further urging that he accept the portfolio of Secretary of War. It was, he said, "public consideration" that induced him to reconsider his determination to remain in private life.

Pierce's Cabinet was sectionally acceptable if all of its members were not wholly so. William L. Marcy was given the Secretaryship of State, thus softening his failure to secure the nomination at Baltimore; the somewhat chameleon-like Caleb Cushing of Massachusetts was Attorney-General, and

is reputed to have suggested Davis to President Pierce for a Cabinet position.⁵ Cushing too was a Mexican War veteran.

It was soon seen that these three members, Marcy, Cushing and Davis, were closest to the President, and it was Davis' wishes that were the most likely to be carried out. The President had written Davis that the politicians were trying to make all they could out of their friendship. But he hoped nothing would disturb it. In his first message to Congress President Pierce had referred to the laying of the sectional differences which had so distracted the country previous to his election, and said, "That this repose is to suffer no shock during my official term, if I have the power to avert it, those who placed me here may be assured." Doubtless he overlooked the fact that he in his sympathies was a Northern expansionist and that the member of his Cabinet whose counsel he most often sought and took, was an extreme Southern expansionist, and expansion if carried on in the South inevitably involved the question of slavery. The Secretary of War since the Texas days was a pronounced annexationist. If land could not be acquired in one direction it must be in another. Cuba, Central America and Mexico still presented possibilities, and a basis of operations to further such end must be secured. Seemingly the President's concurrence was gained, even at the risk of reviving the slavery question which he had so happily assured the country was in repose. General Quitman was always to be relied on for a Cuban enterprise; there was William Walker, whose plans in Nicaragua⁶ might easily have called forth the best efforts of our Marines, and it appears that all this Central American aggrandizement was in part the scope of empire the Secretary was designing.

A protectorate over a part of Nicaragua⁷ Davis believed

to be desirable, since this was the route by which the East and West coasts were linked before transcontinental railroads or highways existed. As a military man he saw the importance of maintaining this link in event of war. At the same time he recognized the even greater importance, the military necessity in fact, of the railroad from the Mississippi to the Pacific coast. Other routes had been under consideration, growing out of the changing conditions of the past ten years. The migrations that had moved in almost rhythmic measure across the central and northern part of the country had left the trails that indicated that there too transportation might have some special importance. Douglas was now at work on one of his territory-making enterprises, and the formation of Nebraska and Kansas was the outcome. Douglas, who for so long was believed to have the Southerners' wishes most at heart, had his own wishful eye upon the presidency for 1856. His method included going to Davis' house on a Sunday morning. The Secretary would be the only one to reach the President on that day, for Mr. Pierce had pleased a great part of the country as being a strict Sabbatarian, and even expansion plans were secular and would have to wait week-day consideration. This early advocate of self-determination, Douglas, had placed in the bill a disturbing point that the settlers themselves should determine whether or no slavery should exist in the territory of Nebraska. It was some days later that the bill took the more startling form of the division of the territory into two, under the name of the trouble-making Kansas-Nebraska Act, and by the end of May, Pierce had signed it. John Brown had a territory to operate in, and the Emigrant Aid Society ample room for activity, and the Missourians a chance to repeat on election

days. More than all else it brought slavery in all its reaches into the oratory of Congress again. It was perhaps Davis' major mistake—that Sunday morning visit.⁸ It marked also the end of his belief in Douglas. The route a transcontinental railroad should follow was a part of the problem the Kansas-Nebraska Act produced. The real estate interests of Chicago and the new country made claim for the Central route. The Secretary of War had envisioned the Southern route as part of the "manifest destiny," and his influence with his President and his party resulted in the \$10,000,000 cash-in-hand Gadsden purchase, a section of Mexico that was essential to the Southern route. Congress authorized that the four routes under discussion should be surveyed.

It was a few months after the Administration had come in that the President and his Secretary of War left Washington for New York to take part in the celebration of an early effort in American advertising. The lesson had been learned, however, from England in 1851 with the opening of the Crystal Palace which inaugurated trade advertisement.⁹ Now such an exhibition was on here, and the President had come to show his support and interest in the advancement of trade. And it gave the Secretary opportunity to make clear the importance of the whole principle of expansion as well as to reassure the people at large how great was the Constitution. There were stops made at Wilmington, Philadelphia, Trenton and Princeton, and speeches followed as a matter of course. At Trenton, Davis said that "the danger is not that by these acquisitions we shall sow the seeds of disunion; but . . . rather that, by an inordinate acquisition, we shall sow the seeds of centralization."

At Philadelphia the speech was in the main to show how

the Pacific Railroad was a measure of military preparedness, and the importance of its construction.

At Wilmington Davis declared: "The Constitution is our bond of Union. . . . A strict observance of the Constitution . . . is the highest duty of an American citizen. He is not worthy the blessing our fathers left us who would not claim all the rights of that Constitution, and he is no freeman who would attempt to usurp privileges not conferred by it. It is the maintenance of that bond which is to perpetuate the Union forever." Then the annexionist spoke: "It was that happy conceit which held sovereignties together, that permitted an unlimitable extension of territory, for there is no expanse which may not be covered by this Union, if its delegated powers are strictly and constitutionally exercised."¹⁰ Empire, phrased to suit the voter, was never more persuasively argued.

The Secretary stressed in his Reports the need of proper protection for the Pacific Coast. The vast territory that had been opened up after the Mexican War had stimulated emigration which went forward on the flood, and the Secretary saw the importance of establishing posts well equipped with ordnance and ordnance stores at strategical points, not only across the reaches of the prairies but on the Pacific Coast as well. He was explicit on this point of preparedness.

"With a water transportation of sixteen thousand miles, and land routes impracticable for the transportation of heavy supplies, it will be too late to adopt these measures when the communication by sea is liable to interruption; and no prudent nation should trust, in matters of such vital importance, to the chances of a future that no human sagacity can foresee,"¹¹ he said in his first Report.

It so happened that this was a period of acute Anglo-

American relations. The Clayton-Bulwer Treaty was only three years old, which had established a policy for Nicaragua and the Isthmus that England and America would "neither fortify or occupy or exercise any dominion over . . . any part of Central America," and the interpretations of the State Department and the Foreign Office were as different as if the treaty were in a foreign language. England's English read that such requirement referred to the future, and America's English that England would withdraw, which seems indeed a strange reading for the State Department to have made. The situation caused the Anti-British in this country to feel that there might be a war and the British at home to feel how correct their Government was. Nothing happened further than for Mr. Pierce to pull an old trick out of his bag, the one of distracting the people from a domestic trouble by producing a foreign one, and it worked. The subject of slavery was to be kept out of all discussions. But the Secretary of War's reference to the proper preparedness for "a future no human sagacity can foresee" was quite clear.

Throughout his Secretaryship all the matters incident to expansion were stressed in one form or another. There were the surveys made and yet to be made of the most economical railroad route from the Mississippi to the Pacific. The instructions included securing the minutest details in regard to meteorological conditions, geological and zoölogical data. In short, all matters that would give information as to sustenance for population with a view to trade routes. Davis had long been intimate with Professor Henry, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, who was often a guest at the Davis house. Davis felt at home, it seems, in scientific matters.

It was one of his accomplishments and he always liked to be with scientists. The Smithsonian experts, therefore, at his request were asked to make some of these comprehensive surveys.

Foreseeing the time and difficulties that must be overcome in this railroad project, he recommended the use of camels, and after some difficulty with Congress secured an appropriation for the experiment. The idea of using camels for transportation purposes in the country did not originate with Mr. Davis. Camels had been brought out to Virginia in 1701, though nothing further is known about them.¹² An attempt had been made just a hundred years earlier than Secretary Davis' plan, when the Governor of North Carolina, Arthur Dobbs, imported camels as beasts of burden on the large tract of lands he owned in that State. The Army, too, had tried the idea. It became a pet project of Davis as Senator, and he went into the subject thoroughly and made a recommendation to the War Department as early as 1848 that the experiment be tried. So convinced was the Senator of their value that he made a speech on the subject in the Senate as a member of the Committee on Military Affairs, in 1851, and sought to add a rider for such expenditure in the Army Appropriation Bill. But it was not until March, 1855, that the bill became a law and a mission was sent to the East to buy some of the animals.

Davis advocated Government gun factories for heavy guns and cannon. Congress had heretofore failed to make an appropriation and private concerns had handled the enterprise.

Like all War Secretaries, he recommended an increase of the regular standing Army. At the time it had not exceeded

11,000 men. By 1856 the strength of the Army was brought up to 15,562.

Under his direction, four regiments, two of infantry and two of cavalry, were added to the military establishment. When these new cavalry regiments were formed he recalled the work of an engineer officer who at the time was Superintendent of the United States Military Academy, and offered him a commission as Lieutenant-Colonel of one of the new regiments. It was accepted and Colonel Robert E. Lee was for the first time in his military career given the direct command of troops.¹⁸

As a good soldier Davis had thought for his men. In each of his reports he made recommendations for increased pay to both the officers and enlisted personnel, and suitable pensions to their widows and orphans. Unless the pay were to be commensurate with that of civil life, the better class of citizen would not be attracted to the service. He urged better housing conditions for the troops. He reorganized and developed the Medical Corps. He advocated increasing the West Point training from four years to five, and was later, when again in the Senate, to be insistent on this subject. He was always an active observer of matters at West Point. A few months after his leaving the Cabinet and return to the Senate he was writing his old friend President Buchanan about the qualifications of a Chaplain whom there was some thought of restoring to his detail at West Point. Davis did not consider him as well fitted for the post as the man who replaced him. "The course of studies of cadets and the little preliminary education expected for admission requires that the textbooks should have a special character. To train the men who are the head of armies to maintain the honor of the flag, and in all circumstances to uphold the Constitution,

requires a man above sectional prejudices and intellectually superior to fanaticism.”¹⁴

He introduced the practice of what came to be known as the four year rule—that is, officers might not be kept at distant posts nor remain on duty in Washington past that period.

The duties of the Secretary of War were varied, for they included direction of the public buildings as well as that of the military establishment. It was during this time that work was done on the extension of the Capitol, and Secretary Davis appointed Captain Meigs of the Engineers Corps to this duty. Both the officer and the work were acceptable to the Secretary and just before his retirement he wrote to Buchanan, then but recently back from his post in England and the Ostend Manifesto fiasco, that he regretted illness prevented Mr. Buchanan's coming to see the results of Captain Meigs' work, which he praised highly. —

The first year of his Cabinet service had seen the commencement of the great viaduct which was to supply the city of Washington with water. This was known as “Cabin John Bridge.” It was a fine piece of engineering, and bore the names of those who constructed it as well as that of the Secretary of War, under whose direction it had been built. One of the activities of the Secretary of the Interior, Caleb B. Smith, who had taken over the charge of the water works of Washington to relieve the War Department, in 1862, was to have Davis' name removed, although it had been cut deep into the great stones.¹⁵ President Roosevelt, however, during his Administration, when various organizations of Southern women urged the matter, had the name restored. The latter incident is the more interesting because of a sharp and swift interchange of letters there had been between Davis and Roosevelt, a few years before Davis' death:

Beauvain [*sic*] Mississippi ¹⁶
September 29, 1885.

Mr. Theodore Roosevelt

New York, New York.

Sir:

You have recently chosen publicly to associate the name of Benedict Arnold with that of Jefferson Davis, as the only American with whom the traitor Arnold need not fear comparison.

You must be ignorant indeed of American history if you do not know that the career of those characters might be aptly chosen for contrast, but not for similitude; and if so ignorant, the instinct of a gentleman, had you possessed it, must have caused you to make inquiry before uttering an accusation so libelous and false.

I write you directly to repel the unproved outrage, but with too low an estimate of you to expect an honorable retraction of your slander.

Yours, etc.,

(Signed) JEFFERSON DAVIS

Young Mr. Roosevelt—he was in his twenty-seventh year, and had graduated from Harvard but five years before—met the communication in this way:

New York, October 8, 1885.

Mr. Theodore Roosevelt is in receipt of a letter purporting to come from Mr. Jefferson Davis, and denying that the character of Mr. Davis compares unfavorably with that of Benedict Arnold. Assuming the letter to be genuine, Mr. Roosevelt has only to say that he would indeed be surprised to find that his views of the character of Mr. Davis did not differ radically from that apparently entertained in relation thereto by Mr. Davis himself. Mr. Roosevelt begs leave to add that he does not deem it necessary that there should be any further communication whatever between himself and Mr. Davis.

In February, 1909, however, Roosevelt did send a communication about Davis to his Secretary of War, Luke C. Wright:

The White House,¹⁷

February 16, 1909.

To the Secretary of War:

Will you please direct that the name of Jefferson Davis as Secretary of War should be restored to the Cabin John Bridge?

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

And a constructive piece of work done during Davis' service as Secretary of War is now unspoiled.

Undoubtedly Davis' outstanding contributions were the important surveys for the significant railroad to the Coast which he justified as a Government problem on the ground that it was a "military necessity . . . and the need of safe and rapid communication with the Pacific slope to secure its continuance as part of the Union."¹⁸

Of the employment of United States troops during the troubles in Kansas following the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act he reports that they were used "to suppress insurrectionary movements by citizens of the United States against the organized government of the Territory. . . . Energy tempered with forbearance and firmness, directed by more than ordinary judgment, has enabled them to check civil strife, and to restore order and tranquillity without shedding one drop of blood. In aid of the civil authorities they have arrested violators of the peace, have expelled lawless bands from the country, and regularly guarding its borders have met and disarmed hordes of men, organized, armed and equipped and advancing for aggressive invasion." It

had seemed rather more than this to the country, with the record of bitter strife and reign of terror that preceded the passage of the Act. It was rather a slight reference to what was the immediate occasion of reviving the whole slavery question.

Before the end of his Cabinet office he saw the work on the Public Buildings well advanced. The extension of the Capitol by the addition of the new Senate Chamber and Hall of Representatives was at the point where he could attend to the decorations. The construction of the Post Office Building, and the changes in the Treasury, were nearing completion. But the proposed changes in the War Department waited for a later date.

He followed closely military matters abroad and whenever possible detailed officers of the Army to act as observers, and he kept himself informed on the organization of the different European military establishments. The Crimean War was a means of enlightenment for military organization as well as improvement in hospitalization for the Army, and Davis utilized the information he obtained. He wrote unofficially to Buchanan, then Minister to England, introducing the three young officers, Colonel Delafield, Major Mordecai, and Lieutenant McClellan, who had been appointed by President Pierce, to observe operations of the armies in the "War of the East" as the Crimean War was called. The British and French Embassies here took somewhat precautionary measures, for the letters to various officials of their Governments which they gave to the Commission were sealed. Russia, Prussia and Austria complied at once with the request and with less formality.¹⁹

His intimacy with President Pierce is believed to have been responsible for the appointment of Buchanan as Minister to

England. Buchanan certainly believed it to be the case for he was appointed and informed the day after a call upon Mr. Davis, which he said was undertaken really in the interest of his friend, Mr. Slidell, who was then a candidate for the Senate.²⁰

And Soulé's appointment to Spain seems to have been at Davis' instigation, and certainly John Y. Mason's was to the Court of Napoleon III. The Pierce and Davis families were very intimate, and that fact supported rumors which were about that Pierce depended so largely upon his Secretary of War in many matters. But how far Davis directed the foreign policy of the President is problematical. He was no friend of Marcy's, to be sure. It was at this time that the recall of the British Minister Crampton was asked and exequaturs to the consuls at several cities were canceled, owing to a disregard of the neutrality position of the United States in the Crimean War. Various British officials had been somewhat over-zealous in recruiting for the British Army citizens of the United States. Neutrality again seemed too elusive for definition.

The administration of the War Office suited nicely Davis' gifts and interests, and the work done by the Department under his leadership was constructive and enduring. Enthusiasts after the American manner declare him to have been one of the best Secretaries of War the Government ever had. But best is a hard-pressed word. He left his department better than he found it, which is praise indeed.

The Washington of these years, unpaved, unkempt, was much as Charles Francis Adams found it a few years later: "A dirtier city materially . . . it would not have been easy to imagine."²¹ Not many people had private carriages, so Mr. Seward's courtesy in putting his at Davis' disposal at a

time of severe weather and illness was the more marked. No entertainment was ever elaborate, but there was much friendly visiting in the easy Southern way. Even official Washington in the main did not live in their own houses, and those who did had very modest ones. The handsome Secretary and his accomplished wife were the exception, for their house had some twenty-three rooms in it and they entertained constantly. It was a house that Edward Everett had occupied, on the corner of Fourteenth and F Streets, not far from the White House. It made more easy the meetings of the President and his helpful Secretary of War.

Whatever differences there may have been among the members of the Cabinet, they never rose above the surface, and it is the only Cabinet of the thirty Presidents which remained unchanged throughout an Administration. Such a fact was of comment then as now and the members of the Cabinet felt it to be so essentially due to the President himself that they wrote him a letter signed by them all in appreciation of his service.

Reviewing the four years he replied in part: ²²

It has concededly been a period of general prosperity; defalcation on the part of Federal officers has been almost entirely unknown; the public treasury, with more than \$20,000,000 constantly on hand, has been freer from the touch of fraud or peculation; long-pending foreign questions have been amicably and advantageously adjusted; valuable additions have been made to our already vast domain; and peace has been made with all the earth and without compromise of right or stain upon the national honor. Whatever of credit pertains to the Federal Executive in the accomplishment of these results, is attributable in great measure to the fidelity, laborious habits and ability of the heads of the different departments.

FRANKLIN PIERCE

On the 4th of March, 1857, Davis went to take leave of his Chief. The President was moved at parting with this old friend with whom he had seen eye-to-eye so often during the four years. "I," he said, "can scarcely bear the parting from you, who have been strength and solace to me for four anxious years and never failed me."

Davis had been elected again Senator from Mississippi, and he transferred his papers and his activities from the War Department to the Senate Chamber, where he soon was made Chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs. Once more he was the political soldier.

THE decade reaching from those Compromises of 1850, which were believed to have silenced slavery agitation, to the election of Abraham Lincoln, saw instead a fresh burgeoning of the whole question because of the implications of popular sovereignty. It was the decade of territory making, and territory makings were the setting-up exercises of Statehood which brought the question of balancing the Slave and Free States to a numerical nicety for political representation. The Kansas-Nebraska Act overthrew what had been believed to be those quieting Compromises. The decade saw, too, the passing of three great figures, Calhoun, Clay and Webster. It was the decade that saw a great westward expansion with the covered wagon as its means, making long faint lines across the wide reaches of the prairie. The trek now was to the Coast, where the lure of gold and land had set in motion these covered wagons. These emigrants were to protest the carving out by Southern political sculptors of Slave States in this great sweep of territory, and were to be heard from later in the outcome of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. But at the moment it was the typical frontier type seeking treasure and land—the people who were the restless people of their generation. It was the decade that saw a fair prosperity overthrown and sink to a depression that brought on a financial crisis and threatened real economic disaster.

It was a decade of reform with its accompanying hysterical agitation, and it quickened into life race and religious prejudice and swept the forces into the deep cleavage of 1861.

A great stream of immigration flowing into the country brought the native American sense of its own value to the fore, and the country saw the early efforts of "America for Americans" become a political party slogan. It saw the death of this Know-Nothing Party with its exaggerations and childish paraphernalia, but not before it had forty-three representatives in Congress and five in the Senate, and had cast a vote in the Presidential election of 1856 of practically twenty-two per cent of the entire electorate.¹ Its better element later found place in the new Republican party. There was a general break up of party-lines, while the Little Giant was surging up and down the country protesting the destruction of religious liberty that the bigotry and passion of the Know-Nothings were trying to accomplish. It was the decade that saw Prohibition become one of the clamors for reform, and the State of Maine lead the way for the Eighteenth Amendment. The fanaticism of the Prohibitionists and religionists was soon making common cause with the Abolitionists, or, as in the South, with the pro-slavery group, and out of the campaigns of 1856 and 1860 emerged the political parties along the inevitable lines the decade had sharpened to the breaking point.

It was in the years 1854 to 1856, two of the four years when Jefferson Davis was in the Cabinet, that the project of a Pacific railroad, the repeal of the Missouri Compromise in the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the Dred Scott Decision and Preston Brooks' caning of Charles Sumner, accomplished all that the most blatant jingo could have desired to start a war. The "peculiar institution" lay at the base of it all, and, like water wearing on a stone, the bitter speech that found its turbulent way over the business of government in the Con-

gress flowed on till Mr. Davis gave his order to General Beauregard in April, 1861, to fire on Fort Sumter. Speech then passed into action.

—The decade saw the Napoleon complex for Empire convert Louis Napoleon from President of the French Republic to Emperor of the French, with dreams of returned Colonial Expansion in America. It saw England under Palmerston's robust premiership at seventy spread over the world the *Civis Romanus* doctrine for her nationals yet lose more than half her forces in the Crimea through bad transport service and bitter climate, while Tennyson immortalized the British soldier. But in the end Sebastopol fell. The siege presented interesting military problems and Davis, then Secretary of War, sent three Army officers to the Crimea as observers. There was another observer of operations at this same time, a young Lieutenant of the Navy, David D. Porter, also under the direction of Secretary Davis. He and Major Wayne of the Quartermaster's Department had been detailed to go abroad to procure the camels the Secretary wished the army to experiment with for transport service in the recently acquired territory of Texas, New Mexico and California. There were some three thousand of these animals then at work in the Crimean campaign, and the English officers who had served in India and used them there had great faith in them. Much could be learned of their usefulness, the Secretary believed, and so Lieutenant Porter became a camel expert, but later his interest in gunboats superseded that in camels.

The end of the war and a Congress of the Powers brought with it the Declaration of Paris to which France and Great Britain were signatories, but the United States was not, and this Declaration had in it those two troublesome points—

that privateering is abolished and that a blockade to be binding must be effective, points that were to be brought forward in the then oncoming American Civil War, and whose echoes may still be heard.

The decade saw Cavour, working for his dream of a United Italy, and Garibaldi and the Thousand achieving its initial step at Palermo. "Liberty does not fail those who are determined to have it." It was a stirring doctrine, and one that gathered recruits, and Cavour's dream came true.

It was a decade that saw a Reciprocity Treaty concluded between Canada and the United States that was beneficial to both countries, and supplied a story apparently without foundation, that its passage in the United States Senate was the handiwork of Southern members,² who were fearful that annexation was imminent, which would, of course, increase the number of Northern States. This was political propaganda without doubt, only one of the many stripes being worked into the pattern for the crisis of 1860.

It was the decade that saw the beginning of the relations between America and Japan that have made Commander Perry the toast of all Japanese-American functions and have brought out many allusions to the happy circumstance that the name of the ocean that separates the two countries is the Pacific. The first visit of the Japanese Princes to America was one of the events of consequence when Mr. Davis was Secretary of War.

It was a decade that kept Anglo-American relations active as a fever chart. They were normal directly after the settlement of the Oregon boundary but rose again to a disturbing height over ambitions in Central America when the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty left some doubt as to what its exact meaning was. It was clear that neither Great Britain nor the United

States would ever have "exclusive control" to fortify the much talked of Nicaragua Canal.³ The enticing word neutrality was called into service and other nations were bidden to the feast. Some five years earlier the patient prisoner at Ham had been led to authorship of a pamphlet on a *Canale Napoleone de Nicaragua*, almost indeed to becoming Governor there through the offer of Nicaragua itself. But no more came of it than to quicken in Napoleon III's brain some twenty years later the abortive Mexican effort towards French expansion in this country.

The difficulties which the Treaty caused between England and America were smoothed out in a final arrangement of territory, but Jefferson Davis as Secretary of War was to make some interesting demonstrations to President Pierce as to the value of the Canal route, and in a speech at Mississippi City in 1857, as a United States Senator, he applauded the filibustering efforts of William Walker in Nicaragua, which he said would be of service to American civilization. It was the expansionist speaking, and in the same speech he regretted that the *Black Warrior* incident had not been handled better in order that Cuba might have become part of the United States.⁴ But the regret, one fancies, was more for the failure of acquirement of the island than for the actual wording of the amazing Ostend Manifesto, which still furnishes a unique example of diplomatic expression, as well as purpose. It was the period when no effort was lacking on the part of the Southern leaders to gain Cuba, and a war with Spain would have been a minor event in the long game of expansion with its corollary of slavery.

The *Black Warrior* was a merchant ship under American registry. The Spanish had seized her off Cuba on a tech-

nicality concerning her manifest and taken the cargo of cotton. And Soulè, the American Minister at Madrid, began his own spectacular demands to Spain to adjust this "insult," thinking them presented in a form not likely to secure them. The matter was now moving to the meeting at Ostend and the fabrication of the Manifesto with its purpose of getting Cuba, either by purchase or by seizure. And the London *Times* was moved to say, "The diplomacy of the United States is certainly a very singular profession."⁵ And there was ended Davis' hope of securing Cuba. The mind that had guided the choice by the President of Soulè, Mason and Buchanan to their respective foreign posts operated as it so often did—results desired were very clear indeed; the process of getting them often required a skill and diplomacy which Davis never had.

It was the decade that saw the speed pennant won by the Yankee clipper ships due partly to the ingenious work of a young Virginian, Lieutenant Matthew Fontaine Maury,⁶ who studied ships' logs in order to learn something of ocean currents and trade winds and wove the mysteries into the Bible of Mariners, his *Physical Geography of the Sea*, and whose knowledge was used as well to lay out the route of the Atlantic cable. The decade saw the end of the subsidies for the transatlantic steamships as decreed by Congress,⁷ while the financial panic of 1857 thwarted further building of the clipper ships and their sails were furled by the end of the 'fifties.

It saw a poor white in North Carolina write a book, whose title, *The Impending Crisis*, was to pass into the speech of the country along with "irrepressible conflict" and "manifest destiny" and be the background of Congressional vituperation among the Southern Representatives; claiming to dem-

onstrate the decadence of the South resulting from slavery.

It saw a work of fiction by a woman snatch the laurels, if laurels they were, from organized groups of propagandists and frenzy a whole country. One half because they wanted to believe it to be true, and the other because they knew it was not wholly true. And both halves forgot it was fiction and need not necessarily be true. Debates in Congress, the zeal of the press, all the usual means open for bitter attack failed of accomplishment, until Mrs. Stowe novelized the emotion that was seeking a more general release. And *Uncle Tom's Cabin* aroused other countries as well.

It saw a man of simple faith go to the gallows with thoughts of how beautiful the country was through which he was riding. A quiet had come to a soul who fancied his work had been done when he flicked into flame the fanatic's torch and hurled it, so it was believed, with a view to starting a servile war, that haunting dread of the South since Nat Turner's time. And Jefferson Davis, then United States Senator, was one of a committee to investigate this raid of John Brown, and was to hand in a majority report which lauded the loyalty of the slaves in that they did not respond to the plan, and recommended suitable legislation in the different States to prevent such further acts. The report, it seems, caused little editorial comment. Its results were not so lasting as those of the act on which it was based.

It was the decade which saw a short, stocky man, with "square head, steady deep-set eyes, and mouth cut straight and firm, in lines unsensitive and full of will . . . coarse-fibred, daring, ready-witted, loud, and yet prepossessing withal, winning friends and receiving homage,"⁸ be made a Senator from Illinois and lose the highest place the Nation offered, but be called "Little Giant." It saw another "tall,

rawly boned, ungainly backwoodsman" ⁹ be defeated as a Senator for Illinois but become the head of the Nation and be called "a rail-splitter."

Douglas, whose efforts were forming a principle that was to catch the fancy of nations in 1919 in a broader application, that of self-determination, was applying it to the people of the Territories. They were to decide on their own domestic matters. And the corollary of self-determination in this case was non-intervention of Congress in the matter of slavery. The debates in the House and in the Senate wore on from January to May, until after an all-night session, when Douglas launched all his invective and abuse upon Chase and Sumner, the Senate passed the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, without a division.¹⁰ The House had voted in favor of it by a close vote earlier, and by the end of the month President Pierce had approved it and his Secretary of War, under whose guidance he was often thought to act, saw success for the Democratic party and rested in the certainty that the "peculiar institution" had scored a triumph.

The joker in the bill had been the route of the railroad to the Pacific—the Central route, which should cross Illinois and thereby help his constituents—and Douglas had devised the self-determination plan for the organization of Nebraska to secure the interest and support of the Southern members, since the Southern route to the coast as urged by Secretary Davis would, were Douglas successful, not be accepted. The division of the territory into Kansas and Nebraska was part, too, of his ingenious scheme. The repeal of the Missouri Compromise, in definite statement, was included in the bill, although its implication was clear since Nebraska was north of the 36°30' line.

This stirred the North, which saw slavery carried into new

country together with excitements incident to the Fugitive Slave law. The day following the passage of the bill, the Reverend Thomas W. Higginson's expensive effort to aid a fugitive slave—it cost the United States some \$40,000¹¹ to deliver him to his master—roused the North still further, and Mr. Thayer's Emigrant Aid Society was to take on unusual activities in Kansas. The fruits of William Lloyd Garrison's twenty-five-year efforts in propaganda by word were to be galvanized into action in Kansas, and John Brown engaged in some successful rifle-practice on the Pottawatomie. The Aid Society found that the emigrants, whose wanderings to the new territory they had financed, were set upon by the Missourians because they held their claim to be that of first occupation. They had their slaves with them, too, the Missourians. The moment had come to arm these settlers, so Mr. Thayer's company thought, and sending arms to the homesteaders who were under their protection became the Society's imagined duty. It was creating such a background that led to the riots over the Lecompton Constitution and that made Kansas the field of battle over the question whether slavery should be extended anywhere on this continent.

One of the early speeches Jefferson Davis made after his return to the Senate from his Cabinet position was on the Lecompton Bill. He was neither extreme nor truculent but bore himself "with decorum and moderation."¹² "The whole charge is, and has been, that we seek to extend our own institutions into the common territory of the United States. Well and wisely has the President of the United States pointed to that common territory as the joint possession of the country," he told the Senate.

Buchanan, who had recommended the adoption of the

Lecompton Constitution, had put himself on record in a special message to Congress in which he declared:

"It has been solemnly adjudged by the highest tribunal known to our laws that slavery exists in Kansas by virtue of the Constitution of the United States. Kansas is, therefore, at this moment as much a Slave State as Georgia, or South Carolina."¹³ This would undoubtedly have been true had the Lecompton Constitution, been put into force with this section, "Free negroes shall not be permitted to live in this State under any circumstances."

The excitements incident to the settlers, both those from the South who came not so well aided and those from the North who were the beneficiaries of the Emigrant Aid Society, had kept the State of Kansas bleeding Kansas indeed. The bill prohibiting slavery, by which Kansas entered the Union, was finally passed in January, 1861, and was ratified by popular vote. The disturbances incident to the Topeka and the Lecompton bills were at rest, but that came when Buchanan was no longer President. The entrance of Kansas into the Union as a Free State was a factor in the oncoming war. There was to be ample matter for discussion in Congress, and the situation had led to the formation of a new political party.

The mass meeting at Ripon, Wisconsin, in February, 1854, had declared such a party should be formed with the name Republican if the Kansas-Nebraska Act passed, and with its passage, the State Convention at Jackson, Michigan, in the following July confirmed the idea. The first national convention in June, 1856, in Philadelphia, saw the machinery set in motion for the organization that brought about, four years later, the election of one whom the South said was a sectional President, whose election could only mean war.

This was Abraham Lincoln, who, Woodrow Wilson said, understood the South as no other Northern man of his generation did. "He respected, because he comprehended, though he could not hold, its view of the Constitution; he appreciated the inexorable compulsions of its past in respect of slavery; he would have secured it once more, and speedily if possible, in its right to self-government, when the fight was fought out. To the Eastern politicians he seemed like an accident; but to history he must seem like a providence."¹⁴ In the first campaign of its existence, this new party had a picturesque but not successful candidate, and the robustness of John C. Frémont with his politico-military record in California, and the slogan, "Free soil, free speech and Frémont," were not winning enough, although they brought together many Northern and Northwestern voters in the vain hope of gaining a majority over Buchanan whom the South voted for with enthusiasm, and who carried his own State, Pennsylvania, and Indiana and Illinois as well. The new party's candidate polled 1,341,264 votes as against the 2,712,703 which Mr. Buchanan and Fillmore together mustered, but Mr. Buchanan went to the White House, where he brought the good will of the South, for shortly before election day he had said, "All they [the Southern people] ask for is to be let alone."¹⁵ Before he left Washington he was to be as much disliked by the South as he had been admired. The man who succeeded him was the first President elected by this new party.

It was the decade that saw Davis at his zenith in political power. In the first part of it he was Davis the secessionist, until the temporary repose of the Compromise stilled the slavery matter, and when, some of the Southern writers feel, the South had far better chance to succeed than at the end of

1

Happy to much brother
 democrats in this hall
 so memorable by its as-
 sociations with the first
 movements for american
 independence

Here declarations for
 the assertion of commu-
 nity rights - Declaration
 of independence. Fra-
 ternal cooperation in
 revolutionary struggle
 around are seemed to
 recall - Washington's camp.
 Braddock & Bunker's hills.
 Blood of men who lived for
 country died for mankind.

Recognized independent.
 aspects of confederation. Const.
 Diff: between Confed. & Union
 Each an individ. not states.
 Not needful to argue that
 Mass. did not surrender her
 sovereignty - After resolution
 because of immersion of community.
 rights not accept change of Nation
 Idea of state coercion.
 obligation record because no free
 right to withdraw but not violate conf.

2

states and individuals bound
 to further individual fulfillment
 of obligations & duties while
 receiving benefits of enlarged
 Higher law convenient
 doctrine for criminal
 sectional agitation ready
 capital of demagogues.

General self for a purpose
 Diversity promotion of -
 Argument of incompatibility.
 Has difference increased.
 Communism - intercourse
 facilitated - Similarities.
 Common goals, sacrifices,
 hopes & aspirations.
 Strengthening shadows.
 Is Sun declining - or are they
 mists rising with its increas-
 ing splendor, to vanish in its.

The controversies which
 have disturbed the country
 have disappeared and one
 shall that go on to a cata-
 trophe or lead to development
 of truth.

Hopeful of good, feeling
 that nation has command
 that reason is speaking the
 supremacy, and encouraged
 by the ~~beginning~~ which brings
 me here to confer with the nation.
 ally of the South will examine
 the misty cloud which throws shadows

With the House of Representatives, standing
 in the House of Representatives, standing

What is subject of contract
Rights of property in the
labor of Africans.

Political power over
Nation formed for
mutual protection and
common defence.

Free down of transit &
free down of trade, equal
privileges and immuni-
ties to the citizens of one
state when in another
implied recognition
and protection of all
prop. rights. But as
some states might pro-
hibit slave property it was
expressly provided for.

Thus a thorough recog-
nition as property by the
constitution, it remains
so by the common law
of the U. S. however it
may be forbidden by
the local law of com-
munities.

Idea of founders see
Hamilton, Madison & Sedgwick

To determine what is property
States supreme in
their own limits no
power beyond

Federal Govt. no power
to determine any where
functions and duty to
protect - none to destroy,
Forbidden even to take
private property for pub.
use unless - &c.

But it may be said
as it has been said
there is no purpose to
interfere in states but
to prohibit in territory
and here as before I
deny the power. The terri-
tory is the com. property of
the states, whose agent the
federal Govt. is made
trustee for their disposal
also. The agent cannot
in this or other cases ex-
ercise powers not delegated.
No power to discrimi-
nate between citizens the
point occurs, to establish
the sovereign power of
determining what shall or
shall not be property, and

in the form of penalties
to provide for taking
private prop.

It is hardly needful
to argue that the fed.
Govt. cannot confer
on a territorial corpo-
ration authority to do
what it cannot itself
perform.

If there no power
in Genl. Govt. no power
in other states, if the
matter belongs to each
separate community
why agitation.

It has been said there
is a moral obligation
- sin of slavery so great
as to forbid union
with slave holders.

By what standard
do they measure.
Not so thoughtful their
poor fellow men.

Bible teaching -
decrees of God Noah,
Moses, Jesus.

Addressing rightly
~~the magistrates~~
~~the magistrates~~ to Peni-
tentiary - but, deny
decrees of God.

History of man.
Enslavement of In-
dians by Spaniards
Bishop Las Casas.
Consequences.

Limaica. San Domingo
Commerce and
manufactures of
U.S. Brought to others.
Effect of agitation.

Compare purpose with
probable consequences,
of extrajudicial acts.
Look at in light of
compact.

Fraternity, Ministry,
stability, progress.

Fulfillment of hopes
which animated revo-
lutionary heroes.

8 [1858, Oct 13]

Lao long has construction disturbed.

Too conspicuous in the strength of Union -
meets upon granite
coast.

Block of landing
removed - left section.
at hostility he prepared
per from Hammett Hall
her old timbered which
have remained to the
torres of cedars &c.
are attached to petri. though
should not be jarred by.

Original MSS notes of Speech of Jefferson Davis
in Faneuil Hall Boston in Mr Davis's own writing

the decade. He was no believer in the Fugitive Slave Act, as was the case with many in the Lower South;¹⁶ but his mind was working toward the plans he furthered in the middle part when as Secretary of War he had even greater political strength in the interesting task of directing the mind of President Pierce to the expansion plans of the Southern leaders in the Union itself as well as in the Caribbean. Cuba was indeed the Pearl of the Antilles, but not above price. And the end of the decade, when he returned to the Senate and his speeches became those of a special pleader serving the squirearchy of the South, though not always in the radical form many wanted.

The winter of 1858 and '59 found him critically ill again with long absences from the Senate Chamber, but Mr. Seward, coming often enough to see him, kept him informed of the political scoring the Senators North and South were making. And Mr. Seward's "irrepressible conflict" speech was months old.

The summer of 1858 the family went North to Maine. It was a measure of health, but the politicians made it a measure of politics. And he undoubtedly used it to measure his acceptability to Northern Democrats as a Presidential candidate. In the course of his stay Davis made the speeches that gave some satisfaction to the Democrats of the North, the one at Portland where he was serenaded, and in his acknowledgment of this courtesy outlined his strong sentiments for the Union, and was skillful in avoiding provocative matter. In Boston at Faneuil Hall he lingered upon States' Rights Democracy which he saw to be acceptable in its meaning to the Democracy of the North. He faced the popular sovereignty principle and discovered in it what was disturbing the peace, because while States' Rights Democrats were in

the North, they were not to be found in the Halls of Congress. To his own constituents and to many others in the South, the speeches did not give satisfaction. Davis had, they felt, remained too long in the North. When he was on his way to Portland by boat it chanced to be the Fourth of July, and as part of the celebration he was asked to make a speech. "Jefferson Davis at Sea" was the witty caption a Southern paper carried in quoting the speech. The time had now come when sharp, crisp statement of alignment was what the people wanted. And so it was after the New England speeches as well as one made in New York that Davis, to the Lower South at least, seemed to have trimmed his views for his audiences.

He was building in part the foundation for his candidacy as President, but he soon proved to be building the structure that elected Abraham Lincoln. Davis too had his debates with Douglas, but they were in the Senate and not at the hustings, and the underlying purpose was to defeat Douglas' nomination for the Presidency. Popular sovereignty was more acceptable than the bid of the Lower South to have slavery protected in the territories, and Davis went down to defeat at Charleston when the convention was broken up in April, and met later in Baltimore and nominated Douglas. In June of 1860, Davis was writing of Douglas to his old friend, Franklin Pierce: "If our little grog-drinking, electioneering demagogue can destroy our hopes, it must be that we have been doomed to destruction."¹⁷

It was in the autumn after Buchanan's inauguration that Davis made the speech at Mississippi City in which he stated unequivocally his attitude on slavery. "African slavery," he said, "as it exists in the United States, is a moral, social and

political blessing." He believed it to be the duty of the national Government to protect this political blessing in the Territories as it did any other sort of property. The Kansas-Nebraska Act and the more recent Dred Scott Decision of the Supreme Court—the two great forces to disturb the peace of the decade—were no doubt in his mind. It was in the next four years of his life that as United States Senator he sought to build up and sustain the contentions of this speech.

What had become of the lost leadership of the South? Able, discerning at times, but not with long vision, Davis sought to hold the fury that now moved so fast. At no time is he more interesting than in these years when he was seeking to hold off the dis-union sentiment in the South, and at the same time to find the means to thwart the gaining power of the North. He courted theory, but was vague when he sought to move it into action. But there were economic forces that were moving as fast as the rising tide of secession. Leadership of the individualist was beginning to give way to the mechanism that industry was creating, and a form of labor had to go down in the crash because the Iron Age was stronger.

It was the decade that saw the end of feudalism.

It saw the end of the Old South in that rare way of living that had there been no war could scarcely have survived the mechanistic era. But that it passed in the din of guns and high resolves and ideas of sectionalism which could not be accommodated, make it one of the most tragic fragments of history.

THE winter of 1860 and '61 in Washington found its tone from the result of the election on November 6. A Republican President had been elected, a sectional President, the Southern papers said, and that inevitably meant war. There had to be some delay before there could be much editorial comment about it, for the returns were slow in being assembled. On November 8 the *Richmond Dispatch* said there was enough to make it certain that Lincoln had been elected, and declared it to be the "most deplorable event that has happened in the history of the country. The Union may be preserved in spite of it; but we are prepared to expect trouble." The following day it commented on the fact that fortunately in no instance up to this time had any of the eighteen Presidents "been chosen by the Southern or Northern States exclusively."¹ The election produced an outburst on the part of the South, and political affairs both North and South became news.

Through the summer there had been little political matter published. A good deal of space had been given to Mr. Everett's Fourth of July speech which contained a defense of popular government against the assaults upon it that Lord Grey had made in the House of Lords. That eminent Peer was at work, naturally, upon protests against the extension of the franchise. England had to wait seven years longer for that, and Lord Grey cited the United States as an example of failure. Mr. Everett's, "No, the Government of the United States is not a failure. It is the most marvelous suc-

cess of which history makes mention," was a doubtful reply at the moment. But both England and he had to learn that it could survive even so appalling a thing as a civil war. The papers were filled with accounts of the Prince of Wales' visit, and with reports that restaurant cars were being introduced into Pennsylvania; ² that an English Earl "had built a carriage which is propelled by steam upon an ordinary turnpike road," in which he traveled some eighty miles, making about eighteen miles an hour; ³ and that the most famous thing in America was "Dixie," which could be heard "in the gulches of California and the forests of Aroostook." But of political matters or of the gravity of the disunion rumblings there was singularly little mention. There was one editorial in August against disunion and pointing out the horrors of civil war.⁴ It was foreign news in the main that seemed of consequence and more space was given to it.

But the Friday following the election of Mr. Lincoln, domestic matters became the real news. A President had been elected backed by a party which had pronounced against the extension of slavery into the Territories, and had had a good deal to say about local option on that subject in the regions where organization was still lacking. He was not desirous of interfering in States where the "political blessing" of slavery, as Mr. Davis called it, existed. And had Mr. Lincoln's popular vote been the deciding one rather than that of the Electoral College, Douglas would have seemed not so far behind and the Republican vote not so sectional. The Democratic split, however, gave Breckenridge and Bell a chance to draw away a possible majority for Douglas, and in that election was seen one significant reason for the failure of the Confederacy. The States of the South could not agree among themselves as to how best to serve

their own need. The Lower South was determined upon Secession because slavery was the great economic factor and the new party alignments threatened the "peculiar institution." Those States therefore withdrew from the Democratic Convention, and Breckenridge became their candidate with the extension of slavery and the annexation of Cuba⁵ as a telling platform. Had the South not been divided, the new young Republican party but four years old could not have elected a President. But the campaign raged on with the usual slogans, and the small farmers of the Northwest whose connection with Northern Europe and Scandinavia had taught them faith in men of simple beginnings and ways of life rather than those of a landed aristocracy, made Lincoln the man of their choice, and the returns on November 6, 1860, were, in a deciding part, the record of their belief.

The South now had proof in hand that sectionalism was to destroy the Union, and South Carolina lost no time in accomplishing her frequently threatened secession. Within six weeks her summoned convention had promised her "an Independent Commonwealth."⁶ The simple declaration that "the Union now subsisting between South Carolina and other States, under the name of the 'United States of America,' is hereby dissolved," had attained this end. Mass meetings were held in many places to consider what should be done, and in the States where the Legislatures were in session, the business of the day was what form retaliation on Northern aggression should take. When the South read five months later this so-called sectional President's statement, "I have no purpose directly or indirectly to interfere with the institution of slavery. I believe I have no lawful right to do so and I have no inclination to do so," the South had no mind to

heed the statement. The group of gentlemen at Montgomery who had paid the telegraph tolls in order to receive the Inaugural speech as soon as possible knew the temper of their people and knew too the failure of the Crittenden Resolutions. William Lloyd Garrison, and all the Abolitionists, had successfully brought the country to the edge of Civil War, and Mr. Garrison put himself on record in support of secession by counseling "letting the South go in peace" as being one way to be rid of that section of the country and its problems,⁷ a refrain of General Scott's which was later borrowed by Horace Greeley and softened into "Wayward Sisters, depart in peace." In Georgia within little more than a week of the election, Mr. Toombs was addressing by invitation the Legislature and telling the people of the State what awaited them after the 4th of March. "Withdraw your sons from the Army, the Navy and every department of the Federal public service. Keep your own taxes in your own coffers—buy arms with them and throw the bloody spear into this den of incendiaries and assassins and let God defend the right. . . . Nothing but ruin will follow delay. . . . Twenty years of labor and toil and taxes all expended upon preparation would not make up for the advantage your enemies would gain if the rising sun on the fifth of March should find you in the Union. Then strike, strike while it is yet time."⁸

The man who was to be the Vice-President of the Confederacy, Stephens, the following night in the same hall placed himself on record as believing that secession was not the wisest way to right existing wrongs. He thought the State had power to secede, but urged that it should be done through the calling of a convention. The Milledgeville Convention of January 16th was the result. But by that

time the States of Mississippi, Florida and Alabama had seceded.

When Congress assembled at Washington on December 4, the capital was well aware of the tensivity of the feeling which sectionalism had reached. Miss Harriet Lane was dispensing hospitality at the White House on behalf of her Sabbatarian uncle, and doing it, it seems, with a good deal of natural grace. She had had London experience when her uncle was Minister to England, but social experience of any sort seemed scarcely necessary to meet the requirements of the White House entertainments. The American people found no rule or regulation impeding their way when they went to the Executive Mansion, and no protocol to prescribe their dress. Men and women alike were costumed as taste and wardrobe allowed. Democracy was indeed triumphant. Washington itself was wholly unattractive. The houses and hotels which lined Pennsylvania Avenue from the Capitol to the Treasury were ugly, unkempt and slovenly, and the ailanthus trees that bordered the Avenue failed to conceal this motley collection of buildings. The democracy of the White House was found among those who made up the society of the capital, for there were none of the more ordinary elegances that belong to civilized life. Luxuries were unknown. The city alternated between mud and dust. Socially, Charles Francis Adams, who was a visitor that winter, found the capital "quite innocent of style," but he also found that Davis impressed him more favorably than any other Southern man he met. "I instantly liked him; and regret extremely that it was not my good fortune, then or later, to see more of him."⁹ He recalled also that Davis, perhaps more than any other public man of the time, was the most outspoken in his appreciation of Mr. Adams' father.

There had been that time when Davis had made his first speech in Congress, and when John Quincy Adams had been noted to leave his seat and come nearer to the speaker that he might the more easily hear this newcomer in the House, and at the conclusion was heard to say that that young man would be heard from.

At this time the unfinished dome of the Capitol was buttressed with scaffolding and cranes to work for its completion. In this unattractive and unfinished city, the tone was Southern in sympathy and expression. With the assembling of Congress this Southern sympathy was to be more outspoken. But through the winter there began to be restraint, and in time avoidance of the great subject between men of the two sections when the occasion was social. The cleavage had come, and it was widened with the days. A week after both Houses were seated, nearly half of the Southern Senators and Representatives issued an Address to their constituents in which they said that "the sole and primary aim of each slave-holding State ought to be its speedy and absolute separation from an unnatural and hostile Union." Mr. Davis and Mr. Benjamin had signed the document. A few days later the Committee of Thirteen, whose task was to find some escape from the impasse, met, and Mr. Davis was one of the group. For whatever reason, political or personal, he did not wish to serve but was persuaded to do so. The fact of his having signed the Address of the week before indicated that he thought it impossible to make any adjustment within the Union. The news of South Carolina's secession was an index of opinion. The Committee had that to reckon with, as well as the Crittenden Resolutions which recalled the Great Compromise of 1850. The Senator from Kentucky had offered a Constitutional Amendment thought to save

the Union: That magical line of $36^{\circ}30'$ should be continued to the Pacific and that would settle the question of slavery in the territories. It was this point where there was to be no compromise. Would future acquisition South of the line be "made safe for slavery"? The territorial question was, as Jefferson Davis said, the crux of the matter. It rested with a majority of the Republican members of the Committee, and they could not agree.

The amendment that did finally pass both Houses and was submitted to the States for ratification was one which made action by Congress impossible within a State, either to abolish or to interfere with slavery. Before the ratification had gone far the firing on Sumter made the Amendment unimportant and it lapsed. When the Thirteenth Amendment became a part of the Constitution it declared that slavery had been abolished in the United States.¹⁰

In the opinion of some Southern writers the passage of the Crittenden Compromise might have averted the Civil War. It is all linked with the usual after-war inquiry of who began the war? It will invite the search of the revisionists of history and the answer will be that, as geologists explain an earthquake by a "fault" in the earth, so must historians find a "fault" that can overturn a civilization. That line of $36^{\circ}30'$ continued to the Pacific would scarcely have averted it.

The President-elect was sought out in his Springfield home by Thurlow Weed, sent by Seward, a member of the Committee, to learn what his view would be. But he had already committed himself to no compromise of any sort on slavery extension, and had written to a Republican Congressman "there is no possible compromise upon it but which puts us under again and leaves us all our work to do over again.

. . . On that point hold firm, as with a chain of steel.”¹¹

The clamors of war were too loud. Even the distracted Mr. Buchanan, who found difficulty in making decisions even after he had opportunity to say his prayers, a ritual he practiced always when an affair of state was to be considered, knew that war was inevitable. He had learned much from Mr. Davis during his administration. Two members of the Cabinet were anxious that he should learn more before completing his Message to Congress and urged Mr. Davis to come to Washington at once. This seems to have been an inspirational summons, for upon arriving and paying his respects to the President, Davis learned that the Message was in rough draft, “still open to revision and amendment.” Mr. Buchanan wanted to read it to him. The modifications Mr. Davis suggested were accepted in their entirety, but between that agreeable meeting and the delivery of the Message, some other voice was listened to, and Mr. Davis found himself obliged on the floor of the Senate to criticize the changes in the paper. He felt, however, that the Federal Government would have done well to accept Mr. Buchanan’s views on the Constitution. Mr. Buchanan denied the right of secession, but his timid habit of thought and action made him fearful of taking steps to oppose it.¹² He had ceased to further the interests of the South.

The moment had come when Davis was to reverse all he had said against “compromise in any form.” Even Douglas in the Senate said that he was able to confirm the statement that Davis, when on the Committee of Thirteen, was ready to compromise on the Crittenden Resolution. And he said this was true of Toombs as well.¹³

Davis was, however, the political soldier, and as such took the military attitude of preparedness in matters of state. At

the time of the November election he was at Brierfield, and in a few days was writing Mr. Rhett, the editor of the *Mercury*, at Charleston, in reply to certain inquiries he had received from him. Were South Carolina to secede, and she alone, he told Mr. Rhett, he did not think the position of Mississippi would be changed by that fact. "A powerful obstacle to the separate action of Mississippi is the want of a port . . . that her trade, being still conducted through the ports of the Union, her revenue would be diverted from her own support to that of a foreign government."¹⁴ Mr. Davis had already envisaged a vocabulary at least in the event of secession. His next point was quite sound on the strategic importance of coöperation. That is, Georgia must go to connect South Carolina with Alabama, and with this done Mississippi's coöperation would follow. On one other point he was more explicit. If South Carolina were to secede and there be "any attempt to coerce her back into the Union, that act of usurpation, folly and wickedness would enlist every true Southern man for her defense." A further paragraph puts in simple statement that a Southern Confederacy was in the making. "The planting States," he writes, "have a common interest of such magnitude that their union, sooner or later, for the protection of that interest is certain." He has written the letter, he adds, with the freedom and carelessness of private correspondence. In a month's time he had placed his name in the circular of the Southern Address, and was to learn that his influence with the weak President Buchanan was superseded.

The Christmas Eve move of Major Robert Anderson from Fort Moultrie to Fort Sumter had consequences when the Commissioners from South Carolina arrived in Washington to inquire into the relations between the independent

Commonwealth of South Carolina and the United States Government. There were the questions in regard to the forts within the State, the matter of customs and other details upon which the Commissioners wished to be informed.

They had left Charleston before Major Anderson and his small body of troops had moved over to Sumter, and they had not been received by Buchanan when the news came of the transfer. When word was brought to Davis at the Senate of the transfer to Sumter, he at once went to the White House, accompanied by Senator R. M. T. Hunter of Virginia. Buchanan, painfully enough, was obliged to make a decision. The Southern Senators were insistent that Major Anderson should be ordered back to Fort Moultrie. The President's decision was that he could not decide. He would have to consult with his Cabinet. When the South Carolina Commissioners had their interview the next day with Buchanan they were fortified with the statement that earlier in the month the President had given his assurance to the South Carolina Members of Congress that no aid or reënforcements would be sent to Charleston Harbor, a circumstance which led his Secretary of State, Cass, to resign. The interview took the form of demanding that the President order Major Anderson back to Fort Moultrie. Buchanan desired time to think upon this. The ritual of his prayers was essential in so great an affair of state. Guidance in this instance led to acting on the advice of the Union members of his Cabinet, and Davis, who was regarded somewhat as member without portfolio, learned his advice would not be taken.

He was not without resources to meet this break with the President. The man who was accustomed to take counsel of himself found a way to make clear to the country the experi-

ence of the Southern Commissioners. What Davis called the "timid vacillation" of Buchanan was succeeded by a temporary firmness, and he declined to receive not only the Commissioners but their final communication. At the request of Congress Buchanan sent the correspondence to the House with a message. The legislative body was to be informed fully of the proceedings. When it was read in the Senate, the last communication was omitted. The President had declined to receive it and therefore it could not be part of the papers he sent. But Davis had broken with his friend, the President, and he chose a method that would give the fact thorough publicity. The communication of the Southern Commissioners, which the President had declined to receive, he insisted upon having incorporated into the proceedings of the day and thereby spread on the Records of Congress. The scene was a stirring one. The clerk was asked to read the certified copy of the communication, which Davis had provided. Objection was made on the ground that it was a "treasonable document," but in the end the Senator from Mississippi triumphed, and the letter became a part of the Congressional record.

The day, January 9, 1861, was an eventful one. Davis was about to step into his carriage¹⁵ on the way to the Senate to hear the President's Message, and, as it turned out, to accomplish this matter of the letter, when a telegraphic dispatch was handed to him that the *Star of the West*, an unarmed steamer which had gone to Charleston with supplies, had been fired upon from the Charleston battery, and put out to sea, her mission unfilled. Jacob Thompson, the one remaining Southern member of Buchanan's Cabinet, had allowed the coming of the *Star of the West* to be a news item¹⁶ in Charleston.

It had been some time since Davis had been to the Executive Mansion. The relations between his old friend and himself were strained. He, however, went at once to make a last appeal to take such measures as he said might "avert the impending calamity."¹⁷ Mr. Buchanan was in a new rôle. He was firm, and Davis says the result was even more unsatisfactory than heretofore. It was the same day, too, in which Mississippi had seceded, but as Davis had not been informed officially, he saw no reason to withdraw from the Senate until such time as he should be informed. It was a charge brought against him that he remained after his State's withdrawal. But other Senators did it as well. It made the conspiracy rumor plausible. He was therefore able the following day to make his speech on the President's Message, which is more truly that of the politician than the statesman. There were flashes in it, as when he could turn a point on his old enemy Andrew Johnson, who he thought had presented his views "vaguely and confusedly" in regard to the coercion of a State. Mr. Johnson at the moment had been citing Washington's use of the military power in an insurrection in Pennsylvania against a portion of the people of a State, so if need be why not against a whole State? This was touching on Davis's special province, anything pertaining to the military. In Washington's use it was not the coercion of a State. It was aiding the State, and in the manner provided by the Constitution. He then passed to Johnson's statement that though his State has just cause of complaint, "we are for remaining in the Union and fighting the battle like men." Davis is at a loss to understand that. "How are we to fight in the Union?" he asks. "We take an oath of office to maintain the Constitution of the United States. The Constitution of the United States was formed

for domestic tranquillity; and how, then, are we to fight in the Union?"¹⁸ This was the argument of neither a statesman nor a good politician. Davis had already had word of Mississippi's secession. These were questions he raised for the last time.

He was about to make a change of capitals. But before he made the change he had been hearing that he was liable to arrest by the Federal authorities, he and the other Southern members of the Senate. He was to hear too that the "conspiracy" of secession which was charged against him on the wings of rumor that were fluttering about had accused him of having exerted every possible influence for two years past to rouse the cadets at West Point to sympathy with the Southern view, and so make them ready for the Southern Army his sense of preparedness was envisioning. But the futile talk of arrest thinned itself out in rumor.

It had been the great year of his life. He had been recognized as the leader in the Senate of the Southern group. Benjamin, whose intellect and method Davis had so admired; Slidell, a former law associate of Mr. Benjamin's;—these and others who were to have a share in the new political group soon to be formed at Montgomery—were ready to give the Senator from Mississippi all praise in the work of the disturbed session of this winter of 1860-61. The year had seen him considered as the Democratic nominee for the Presidency of the United States, and within a twelvemonth he made the President of the Confederate States. Great as his ambition was, its achievement must have seemed something less than reality to him. The man who was to be notified that he had been chosen as President of the new Confederacy owed it not altogether to his leadership in the Senate nor to his popularity throughout the South, but, as we shall see, to

political management in a group of men who were speeding to accomplishment a revolutionary measure, and who eliminated one man after another perhaps better qualified for the great adventure than the man whose reputation lay as a political soldier.

In time official information had reached Jefferson Davis that by Mississippi's withdrawal he had ceased to be a Senator of the United States. He wanted to come once more among his associates and take his formal leave.

He had been critically ill, so ill that it was gravely doubtful whether he would be able to be present and say his farewell to the Senate. His will was great, but there was as well the curiously compensating strength of the highly sensitized egoist, a defense reaction physically as well as mentally. He was leaving the office of United States Senator, the one he had said he preferred to all others, but that was in other days.

The Senate Chamber was crowded with the many Southern sympathizers, for it was known that Davis would make his *vale*. The people had been coming since nine o'clock. Mrs. Davis had sent a servant as early as seven o'clock to keep a place for her. There was scarcely standing room. Ladies sat on the floor against the wall, in the cloak room, along the sofas, in the passages. The crowd was so great that Davis himself had great difficulty in reaching his seat.

When he rose to speak, the man who was like Calhoun denied his master. Nullification was no part of his, Davis' creed. Nullification and Secession were indeed antagonistic principles. He did not advocate that a State should remain in the Union and then disregard its constitutional obligations by nullifying its law. "Secession belongs to a different class of remedies. It is to be justified upon the basis that the States are sovereign. . . ." ¹⁹ The man whom Calhoun had

said would be the new leader of the South thus stated his theme. Applause broke in again and again. The Vice-President called for order. The voice that always was likened to some musical form rose and fell at its owner's will upon the expectant people till they finally heard: . . . "I go hence unencumbered by the remembrance of any injury received, and by having discharged the duty of making the only reparation in my power for any injury offered . . . it only remains for me to bid you final adieu." ²⁰

The day before he had written his friend Franklin Pierce, "I leave immediately for Mississippi, and know not what may devolve upon me after my return. Civil war has only horror for me. . . ." ²¹

Jefferson Davis was once again among his roses.

By February, six "wayward sisters" had seceded, and this month before the inauguration of Mr. Lincoln saw a Republican majority in the Senate, for the Senators of these seceding States had each resigned as his State withdrew. There was some sharp criticism in the South for their withdrawal, thus leaving the Republican majority to work its will. There was more in the North for those who, like Davis, remained on a technicality. February is a short month, so Buchanan's temerity was marked by days, but he nursed a fear that he would see himself burnt in effigy on his way to the quiet of his Pennsylvania home. It seemed to occupy his mind more than the near tragedy of war that, so providentially, were he cautious, would be the desperate concern of this inexperienced politician from Illinois soon to succeed him. So cautious was he in fact that the forts and navy yards of the Southern States had been seized by the States in turn as they went out, and Buchanan had watched them go. All

that remained garrisoned by United States troops at the time of Lincoln's inauguration were Fort Pickens in Florida and Fort Sumter at Charleston. The South in its belief of the sovereignty of the State thought they were but safeguarding their own property. And the thought was a major reason for the hastening war. But before Buchanan had left the White House, Davis had been summoned from his roses to serve the will of the new Confederacy.

A Glory of France rose—a magnificent tea rose—grew near the gate at Brierfield. There were other bushes of this same rose, and they gave the garden its own beauty. Planting or pruning or making slips from these bushes was a favorite leisure pleasure of the Master of Brierfield when he was at home. In the garden, too, one could see through the thick oaks, out past the orchards, the great river making its turgid way to the sea. Roses and the river—that was Brierfield. If he were to be called away, it would be as Major-General of the State troops. A soldier once again. It would have been a satisfaction.

A month before, Davis as a Senator from Mississippi had posed to the Senate at Washington these queries:²² "Shall we allow this separation to be total?" he asked. "Shall we render it peaceful, with a view to the chance that, when hunger shall brighten the intellects of men, and the teachings of hard experience shall have tamed them, they may come back, in the spirit of our fathers, to the task of reconstruction? . . . Or will they have that separation partial? . . . I waive the question of a duality, considering that a dual Executive would be the institution of a King Log. I consider a dual legislative department would be to bring into antagonism the representatives of two different countries, to

war perpetually and thus to continue, not union, but the 'irrepressible conflict.' ” But that was a month ago.

This February morning rose-cuttings were the occupation he and Mrs. Davis had set themselves. The cuttings might, with care, become as fine as the parent bush. But they would never be quite the same.

A messenger rode in on horseback bringing a telegram. There were minutes of silence while Jefferson Davis read and reread the message. Then he told Mrs. Davis its contents. At Montgomery, Alabama, a group of gentlemen intent upon a political experiment had elected him President of the Confederate States.

Roses and the river . . . ?

The change of capitals had come.

Chapter XI

The President of the Confederacy

WHEN Jefferson Davis stepped out upon the portico of the old Capitol at Montgomery, Alabama, at one o'clock on February 18, 1861, and took his oath of office, the machinery of a newly organized political entity was released for operation. Standing between the high Corinthian columns that gave the old building a certain dignity, he delivered his inaugural address. To the people who heard him—it is estimated there were some seven thousand—and to those five million others who were to call him President, he became the symbol of an idea, an idea that was to cost more than a half million lives offered with such lavishness and uncounting of cost as belonged to the spacious ways and mood of the men and women of the old Southland.

Mr. Davis had reached the Capital the night before at about ten o'clock. A Committee of Congress and citizens had met him some eighty miles from Montgomery and brought him to the little city. The enthusiasm of the crowds all along the route from Jackson to Montgomery had compelled him to make many speeches—about twenty-five it was thought he had made—and again on reaching the depot a speech was demanded. Davis departed a little from his customary simple statement. Doubtless the excitement of the moment stirred the orator to rhetorical efforts. He declared the time for compromise had passed. He was determined to "maintain our proud position, and to make all who opposed us smell Southern powder and feel Southern steel. Our separation from the old Union is now complete. No com-

promise, no reconstruction would now be entertained." This speech caught the fancy of the crowd, if it had not Lord Lyons as he copied the extract to be sent to the Foreign Office. Cheer upon cheer followed the carriage which bore Davis away to the Exchange Hotel, his temporary headquarters. Here again the crowd about the hotel called for another speech, after which William L. Yancey, Alabama's most vivid orator and politician, welcomed the President with the words that have become a classic of the South: "The distinguished gentleman who has just addressed us has said the country does not now look to men but to principles. But how fortunate is our country? She has not only the principles for the administration of government, but also the man. She has found in the distinguished gentleman she has called to preside over her public affairs the statesman, the soldier, the patriot. . . . The man and the hour have met." Mr. Yancey's reward for these lyrical periods was his appointment as one of the three Commissioners sent to Europe within a few weeks, in the first attempt to secure recognition of the Confederacy by foreign powers. It was a task suited to his taste, for he had refused a Cabinet position.

The little city quieted down after these demonstrations and waited the more solemn moment of the following day when the President was to take his oath of office.

✕ The Confederacy was but fourteen days old when President Davis delivered his inaugural address, which he says "was deliberately prepared and uttered as written, and, in connection with the farewell speech to the Senate, presents a clear and authentic statement of the principles and purposes which actuated me on assuming the duties of the high office to which I had been called."² And it was but nine days



THE INAUGURATION OF JEFFERSON DAVIS AT THE CAPITOL AT
MONTGOMERY, FEBRUARY 18, 1861

since he was duly elected by the Congress of Delegates from the seceding States in convention. The Provisional Constitution for the Confederate States of America, as this new political grouping was to be called, had been adopted for one year on February 8, so the provision ran, unless in the interval a permanent one should replace it.

The sessions of the convention were held in the Capitol at Montgomery, and the proceedings moved with a swiftness that indicated that the Delegates appointed by the legislatures of their several States were well aware of the task in hand. Seated in the almost circular room, with the Speaker's chair facing the entrance, and above it a portrait of Jefferson, this group of determined men took upon themselves the responsibility of a political experiment that from the start must have momentous consequence. The vast machinery and expense incidental to bringing to popular vote a constitution and the election of officers was waived. In a revolution the element of time is a strong one. The whole remarkable procedure was a matter of days only, and the States, each acting in its sovereign and independent character, as the preamble to the Constitution they so quickly adopted says, ratified this work of the Delegates and pronounced it good. They had at hand a Constitution under which all had lived and which many of those present had been very loath to renounce, and by accepting, some Southern writers think, made the initial mistake of the Confederacy. But this Constitution that they knew they used with such modifications as, in their judgment, fitted their needs. The term of office of President was fixed at six years. After the manner of the English Constitution, Cabinet officers were to have seats in the floor of either House with the privilege of discussing measures relating to their departments. It is a procedure that now has advocates.³

The President had the power to veto any item in an appropriation bill, or approve one.

The institution of slavery was made self-contained in the Confederate States—that is, African slave trade was prohibited, and also “Congress was given power to prohibit the introduction of slaves from any state not a member of, or territory not belonging to, this Confederacy.”—And Representatives were apportioned as in the Constitution of the United States, but the “three-fifths of all other persons” became “three-fifths of all slaves.” In this wise was the half-century struggle with the Federal Government placed in the new instrument. This was a provision wholly unsuited to the minds of the extreme Secessionists, or imperialists one might say, since in extending their lands as they hoped to do, negroes must provide the labor.

No bounties were to be granted nor was a protective tariff to be allowed. However, a dispatch to the Charleston *Mercury* of February 11, 1861, dated from Montgomery, February 8, announced that “a bill has passed continuing in force, until repealed or altered by Congress, all laws of the late United States which were in force upon the first of November last, provided they shall not be inconsistent with the Constitution of the Provisional Government. It is understood that, under this law, a tariff will be laid upon all goods brought from the Northern States.” And then perhaps what was more significant was added: “A resolution has been adopted instructing the Committee on Finance to report promptly a tariff to raise a revenue for the support of the Government.” The *Mercury* on the following day condemned this procedure, declaring free trade to be the true policy of the Confederate States. That would have suited better the tastes of some of the Carolinians, who entertained

hopes of war rather than submission, and dreams of empire, and desired to court the good will of Europe with free trade.

There were, in short, as in all groups, divergences of opinion as to means to attain an end, and the surprising thing is that the Convention was kept in hand. But the end each sought was common to them all, whatever the process in attaining it—an independent nation. The wiser ones of the group recognized the need of revenue, and even with a loan for immediate use from the State treasury of Alabama to that of the newly formed Confederacy, a tariff at least for revenue only would have seemed an obvious necessity. It was one of the many points relative to finance that marked the weak financial policy throughout the short life of the Confederacy.

The Convention had been at work but four days when the officers of the new Government were chosen. Davis was not the first choice for the Presidency. Some intimation that he would be when the new Government should be formed had been known to him, but he felt "adequate precaution had been taken to prevent it." He believed himself "not as well suited to the office as some others." His wish was to take his place in the field, and his State had given him the highest command in her army.⁴ —

In the first meetings Toombs was more prominently mentioned, but his own Georgia delegation was divided between him and Cobb and Stephens. Had Toombs been chosen, there would have been at the head of the Confederate Government a man of commanding force and personality and with a knowledge of men, which the austere scholarly Davis never had and never learned. He remained the doctrinaire to the end. Toombs in the matter of finance alone might easily have accomplished what the unskilled Memminger

scarcely thought of, and Davis' own ignorance of such matters, together with his too feminine jealousy of others in authority, brought about in part the debacle of the Confederate finance.

In the early discussions of the Convention it was understood that the Mississippi delegation were inclined to save Davis to head the State troops. As always the aura of the military man was diffused about Davis, and in some fashion these experimenters in a great adventure sensed that a man with a military record might best suit the need of his time and capture the good will of the people. Within twenty-four hours the news spread about that, the Mississippi delegation excepted, all the other States were for Davis. So when the messenger on horseback brought the word to him at Brierfield that he was the unanimous choice of the Convention for the high office, it came as a shock, almost a "disappointment," when he thought of active service in the field which, in the event of war, his rank in the militia of his State would secure him.

The little man whose pale eager face and frail body had again and again stirred the House of Representatives with his speeches in "the fateful decade," and whom Lincoln admired above every other member, Alexander H. Stephens,⁵ had been the choice of many for the highest place in the Confederacy now forming. Indeed, in the early sessions Senator Wigfall, of Texas, who seems rarely to have shared in any enthusiasm for Davis, and others, were telegraphing to Montgomery urging that Stephens be made President since, obviously, it would conciliate the conservatives.⁶ As one of those political adjustments incidental to any convention, Stephens was given second place. And the telegraph carried to

the country the news that the heads of the new Confederacy had been chosen.

Rhett had seen his candidacy put aside and Toombs of Georgia had so fancied himself as a likely candidate as to have indicated that he would accept,⁷ but the States of the Southwest steadily maintained their adherence to Davis, and the election was unanimous for him as was the case with Stephens. And there seems too to have been the notion that the head of the new Government would best not be chosen from militant South Carolina. A leader from the Southwest would indicate perhaps the widespread purpose of the South, that the revolution was not the work of a little group of wilful men. The essential point to be made to the seceded States was unanimity of opinion among these wise men, and it was secured in this fashion.

The day of the inauguration found the old Southern city ready for more acclaims. The President was driven from the Exchange Hotel to the Capitol in a carriage drawn by four white horses, and at the suggestion of a young lady the band played "Dixie." The Southern anthem had been found.

The inaugural speech suited well the attention of the crowd, although there was no mention in it of slavery.⁸ Davis emphasized the point that the people of the South were an agricultural people who sought only the freest trade their necessities would permit, "our true policy is peace," but nevertheless notwithstanding this, "in the present condition of affairs"—here spoke the soldier—"there should be a well instructed and disciplined army, more numerous than would usually be required on a peace establishment." The familiar doctrine of the right of secession was set forth, deriving its authority from the compact theory of the Union which gave

each State as a sovereign the inalienable right to exercise this power at will. "We have changed the constituent parts but not the system of government," he said. He found occasion to applaud the circumstance that the separation from the Union had been accomplished by "no aggression upon others" nor had there been any check to the industrial pursuits of the people. Were commerce, however, to be interfered with, retaliation such as is practiced upon the commerce of an enemy would be resorted to. There would be the necessity to provide at once for the several branches of the executive department having charge of foreign intercourse, finance and military affairs and the postal service. The concluding paragraph was one to hearten his hearers: "It is joyous in the midst of perilous times to look around upon a people united in heart, where one purpose of high resolve animates and actuates the whole; where the sacrifices to be made are not weighed in the balance against honor and right and liberty and equality. Obstacles may retard, but they cannot long prevent, the progress of a movement sanctified by its justice and sustained by a virtuous people. Reverently let us invoke the God of our Fathers to guide and protect us in our efforts to perpetuate the principles which by His blessing they were able to vindicate, establish, and transmit to their posterity. With the continuance of His favor ever gratefully acknowledged, we may hopefully look forward to success, to peace, and to prosperity." 9

The evening found celebrations still going on. There were fireworks, and cannons boomed out salutes across the river and echoed in the wooded rolling land round about the city. And a man of a strange destiny began his work for his people.

The selection of Cabinet officers was an early undertaking.

Within three days the disappointed Toombs was made Secretary of State and Georgia was represented. Toombs belonged to the planter class, if not the gentry. Charles G. Memminger of South Carolina, who began life as an orphanage boy, became Secretary of the Treasury and held the office for three years. When George A. Trenholm, one of the few men in the South equipped by experience for the task, and belonging to the gentry, was placed at head of this greatly taxed department, it was too late. Harry T. Ellet of Mississippi was Postmaster-General for ten days until succeeded by John T. Reagan of Texas. The Secretary of War was Leroy P. Walker, another representative of the planter class, who remained only until the following September, when he went into active military service. At the head of the Department of Justice was Judah P. Benjamin, the Jew "with the slight perpetual smile," behind which the real story of the Confederacy still lies, who never traveled without a copy of Tennyson and so admired Horace; the man who was soon to be recognized as the brains of the Confederacy, and the only man with whom President Davis felt he was matching minds, notwithstanding there had been the manly moment in the Senate some time earlier when the practice of the times had caused the Jew to send Davis a challenge. These were the men with whom Davis surrounded himself, who went about the task of directing a government. In the main the appointments were largely made to meet the personal vanities of men and their States. It was not a sound basis of organization. The scholar-planter looked upon them, and sought to find the way to bend them to his will. The Southerner is an individualist, and it was not the method to use. One after another left with the exception of Reagan, Benjamin, and Mallory, the Secretary of the Navy, who remained

throughout the four years only to take leave of the President when his capture was so imminent they fancied it to be their own. So the doctrinaire who had been part of a Cabinet that remained unbroken through an Administration found no way to conciliate or to heed the men whose counsel might have served him in his superhuman task. With a nervous system that was soon torn with the immense demands he made upon it, physical illness followed that often nearly wrecked him. It has been said of him that as the years went on he grew more bitter and querulous. It is surprising that he was not more so.

Montgomery soon took on the activities of a capital. Office seekers began to arrive, the newspaper correspondents were increasing, the families of the officials organized a society, and the hum and gossip of so varied a group rose above the quiet of this little city. There were two theaters, "The New Theatre" and "The Montgomery Theatre," to offer diversion to the now crowded Capital. There was constant entertaining among the people, although the market was poor, but then, as Mrs. Clement C. Clay, Jr., said, "We give our best and a warm welcome."¹⁰

The executive offices were soon established on the second floor of a large commercial building which stood at the corner of Commerce and Market Streets, at a rental of six thousand dollars.¹¹ Across the way a house belonging to Colonel Edward Harrison¹² had been secured for "the White House" for a year, at five thousand dollars. Montgomery recognized her importance and fixed the prices accordingly. In the meantime the President and his official family stayed at the Exchange Hotel, whose scourge of flies and bad food became an impelling urge to move the Capital of the Confederacy elsewhere.

With Mrs. Davis' arrival and the establishing of the White House with its small garden directly across the way from the executive office, society became more organized. The correspondents were able to send to their papers the news of frequent levees which she held from one to three, "fashionably and numerously attended."¹³ The relaxation for the President were guests of the official family for dinner where he made himself very agreeable. Mrs. Chesnut called him "witty and wise." Perhaps because he talked of Washington and made no mention of the crisis of the moment.¹⁴

To William H. Russell of the *Times* when he went to call upon him, Mr. Davis did not measure up to his idea of him, nor to the Washington values as he had heard them. But he found him to be "like a gentleman."¹⁵

The slim, erect figure carried easily his slate-colored suit; the black silk handkerchief about his neck set off his well-trimmed hair, black too. The trained observer noted his boots, as had a President at Washington in years gone by. The finely shaped head and broad high forehead—an intellectual's index; the mobile mouth, thin-lipped, that could be drawn to give that impression of austerity people later talked about; the square chin that hinted of obstinacy, or, if you like, determination; the large, fine eyes, blue gray, the nose almost Grecian in its regularity, with the nostrils curved and wide. His manner Russell thought "plain and rather reserved and drastic." Now in these early days in May, when a state of war had been declared to exist between the Confederacy and the United States, Davis showed the strain of the past months. He was worn and haggard. He was anxious, but confident, and went about the innumerable details of his business with a determination that was final in its decision. "He lacked nothing of indomitable will and im-

perious purpose." And England, did she believe that there would be hostilities between the States? was one of the questions Davis put to Russell. This England, and what her recognition would mean, lay always near the surface of his thoughts. He assured the war correspondent that he should have every facility extended to him.

The Provisional Congress with the experienced parliamentary Howell Cobb at its head carried on its formative work daily, but more often than not in secret session, and the populace fed itself on rumor. And one tall, slim, rather austere man, the President, was to begin to know at once the sharpness of criticism. "Men already," says Mrs. Chesnut, "are willing to risk an injury to our cause if they may in so doing hurt Jefferson Davis."¹⁶ And a few days later she bemoaned the fact that people were abusing one another "as fiercely as ever we have abused the Yankees." But the work went on, and by March 16 the First Session adjourned to meet on the second Monday in May, unless otherwise summoned, and the Permanent Constitution had been accepted five days before the Congress adjourned.

The tariff duties when published showed but slight reduction from those of the United States. There was a large ten per cent schedule and a very small free list.¹⁷ In the early days Congress had been given full power to levy duties on imports and exports and the Committee on Finance had been instructed to inquire into the expediency of laying an export duty on cotton shipped to foreign ports.¹⁸

By the end of February the Commissioners who were to go to Europe in the interests of the Confederacy had been selected, and by the middle of March they had left Montgomery for New Orleans, going thence to Havana to take the mail steamer for England. The choice had fallen upon

William L. Yancey, Pierre A. Rost of Louisiana and A. Dudley Mann of Virginia, the latter the President's special friend. These gentlemen were believed to be amply equipped with oratory, persuasive charm and force sufficient to present the claims of the young precocious Government for immediate recognition by the mature and seasoned Governments of England and France. The Provisional Congress granted them one thousand dollars a month as compensation and a secretary whose pay was to be three thousand dollars a year. This the President approved.¹⁹

But before or by the time they reached England the British Foreign Office was in possession of a searching estimate of them from the Consul at Charleston, and could draw its own conclusions as to their personal value as envoys. Robert Bunch was peculiarly hard upon Dudley Mann. "His appointment," he wrote, "has given great dissatisfaction to many persons in the South, partly on account of his personal character, which is not good, and partly on account of his having been brought from a State which is not a member of the Southern Confederacy." But Mr. Mann, "the son of a bankrupt grocer," was believed to possess some knowledge of "court life" by reason of his having been sent on numerous missions to Europe, one of which, confides Bunch (the Consul) to Lord John Russell, was to encourage the Hungarians in their struggle with Austria. This was in 1850, and so cognizant were the Austrians of this that the United States Government had been informed by the Austrian Minister at Washington that "it would hang Mr. Mann without scruple in case of necessity." His special fitness for the mission, other than as a "trading politician," was that he was interested in an attempt to establish direct trade by steam between the Southern States and Europe, but Bunch, on the

whole, thought him to have "no special merit of any description." Yancey he recognized as a man of ability, "admirably adapted for stump oratory, a rabid secessionist, a favorer of the revival of the slave trade, a 'Filibuster' of the extreme type of 'manifest destiny' and," he adds significantly, "his services in the cause of Secession have been great. . . . It is supposed that he has made a point of his nomination to this mission and that he could not be refused." Of Judge Rost he says that he is altogether unknown to him, and apparently to every one else.²⁰

Other Commissioners for home service had been appointed and these seem to have been picked with a view to impressing Washington with their moderate views. A group of three gentlemen, Governor Roman of Louisiana, Mr. Crawford of Georgia, and Mr. Forsyth of Alabama, were sent to negotiate "friendly relations between the Government and the United States of America," so that all questions might be resolved and war avoided by the skill of this Commission. Mr. Crawford preceded the others. The sympathetic Buchanan indicated a willingness to receive such Commissioners and refer their communications to the Senate, which was valor of a sort, since he had fears for his personal safety. In the end this valor went and the dread was such that he declined to receive any of the Commission. They fared no better some days later at Lincoln's or Seward's hands. Mr. Russell of the *Times* found them agreeable dinner companions and singled out the editor, Mr. Forsyth, as the most able of the three. He thought too, with his trained journalistic sense, it highly likely their mission would prove abortive.²¹ By early April he knew it was to be, for the President and Secretary of State had definitely refused to hold any intercourse with the Commissioners, and their only recourse was to withdraw from the

Capital. The South had made the gesture of accommodation. Beyond that it could not go.

In the meantime the inaugural address of Lincoln was before the people. "One party to a contract may violate it—break it, so to speak, but does it not require all to rescind it? . . ." "With change of interests may there not be further secessions from those who have already seceded?" asked the President. A moderate, quiet tone pervaded the whole. Certain powers confided in him would be used, he declared, "to hold, occupy and possess the property, and places belonging to the Government, and collect the duties on imports; but beyond what may be necessary for these objects, there will be no invasion." At Montgomery the President and Cabinet were waiting anxiously to know to what lengths this Black Republican President would go, so they made arrangements to have the address telegraphed to them, the Confederate Government paying the tolls.²²

By the 11th of March the Provisional Constitution had become the permanent Constitution and Davis, who says he had no direct part in its preparation—that was Alexander H. Stephens' work—pronounced it "a model of wise, temperate and liberal statesmanship."²³ But it, with its cornerstone of the sovereignty of the States, and slavery, could not survive a war against one whose cornerstone was that of the consent of the people. The Confederacy was all too soon to learn this when governors of States wanted the State Troops for home defense and were opposed to yielding them up to a Confederate Army.

The business of organizing a Government went on, but with, as one sees now, strange delays and omissions. Davis in his speeches on the way to Montgomery had said if war came it would be a long one. His inaugural said their pur-

pose was peace. It was the politician's familiar appeal to the people. The United States fifty years later elected a President who had "kept us out of war," but were to find him in a brief few months the leader of his people in the greatest war, except the Civil War, since Napoleon mastered his way through Europe. Each knew that war must come, but with Davis his knowledge of war made him more alive to preparedness in some ways than the man who so closely resembled him.

But it would seem that he placed his main dependence on European recognition which, if gained, meant the open markets of a neutral. The Southerner cannot doubt, as Justice Lamar truly said. And so Davis allowed the days to slip by that in the end meant loss of time that could not be made up. He seems neither to have sought advice nor to have accepted such advice as the politicians who surrounded him offered. He was accustomed "to take counsel of himself." The initial mistake in policy, as the whole world now knows, was not in buying up all the cotton there was, thereby having a treasury ready made, and shipping it to England and France before the blockade became more than a paper one. The cotton which the South possessed in the spring of '61 was not disposed of at once as it might have been in order to realize funds for carrying on the Government. It was to be but a few months before this was recognized and what the delay in action was to cost. Mr. Memminger was not a super-banker, and a super-banker was what was needed in those chaotic days. The credit of the Confederate Government was at the time, however, sound enough, so that treasury notes were exchanged at par with gold.²⁴ Fiat money was yet to come, and when it did the States had their own paper



SOME CABINET MEMBERS AND COMMISSIONERS OF THE CONFEDERACY

money as well as the Confederacy. Bills were issued bearing the names of the States. The States as well as the people in them could not yield easily their individuality.

The foreign, no less than the financial, policy failed to be outlined in those precious early weeks of the war. Toombs was to find that the foreign policy was to emanate from the room in the executive office building on whose door was a sheet of paper marked "The President." And the weeks moved on. Both North and South were marking time. The Provisional Congress had adjourned to meet again on the 29th of April.

President Lincoln had indicated that Fort Sumter would be evacuated. It was a trial balloon soon brought to earth. And the Southern commissioners heard they would not be received either by the President or Mr. Seward. The Government at Washington would hazard nothing that appeared like recognition of the Montgomery government. Memoranda "on file" were the means employed by Mr. Seward and Justice John A. Campbell, the Southern intermediary. There was to be nothing "official."

To North and South alike the firing on Sumter clarified all doubts. Lincoln called for seventy-five thousand volunteers with quotas from the States. Virginia's months of discussion in a peace conference were over. Two days after the capitulation of Sumter, Virginia seceded. Lincoln's call meant coercion and Virginia no longer delayed her decision. That was not the moment for the legal nicety to be weighed, that "war is not, legally, a coercion of individuals."

With Virginia went the man whose West Point record was of the highest, who had shown ably this training in the Mexican War even without the spectacular aid of a "V," such as

Davis' successful use of a military re-entering angle at Buena Vista came to be known; who had led United States Marines in the capture of John Brown at Harper's Ferry, and who was to be the idol of an army now in the making and of the Southland for all time. Robert E. Lee and Virginia were inseparable.

A hundred guns were fired when word reached Montgomery that Virginia had seceded. Ten was the usual number to announce the secession of a State, and Virginia had had her ten earlier in the day. This new salute marked off what she meant to the South. Quarrels were composed among the office seekers and local politicians. Criticism ceased of officials and policy. The great State of Virginia had made her choice. The other border States were certain to follow.

Lincoln's Proclamation stated that the execution of the laws was obstructed "by combinations too powerful to be suppressed by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings." This, in brief, was the Administration's theory.²⁵ Hence the call for volunteers. And for that and the Proclamation of May 4 to increase enlistments in the Regular Army and Navy above the authorized strength Lincoln was accused of having established a "military dictatorship," for Congress was not in session.

Jefferson Davis, although critical of such procedure, found it necessary under stress to assume similar authority. His own Congress was not in session, which alone had the right to issue Letters of Marque and Reprisal, but his answer to Lincoln's proclamation was two days later to invite "all those who may desire, by service in private-armed vessels on the high sea to aid this Government in resisting so wanton and wicked an aggression, to make application for commissions or

letters of marque and reprisal to be issued under the seal of these Confederate States.”²⁶

When the Confederate Congress convened on the 29th of April, at Montgomery, Davis explained his activity by saying in his message, “Deprived of the aid of Congress at the moment . . . I deemed it proper to issue proclamation inviting application . . . for the immediate issue of Letters of Marque and Reprisal.” The act which the President signed on the 6th of May was entitled “An Act recognizing the existence of war between the United States and the Confederate States; and concerning letters of marque, prizes and prize goods.” Davis, who is so frequently referred to as a “strict constructionist,” learned thus early how essential is elastic power to a war President. And he also told his Congress how fast men were rushing into service—faster than there were arms to equip them.

But the correspondents of the papers at Montgomery found the days interminably dull. They would come to the Capitol, take their seats in the Chamber of Deputies, hear the roll called, prayers offered and a polite invitation to leave. The sessions were in secret. Their notebooks were often “unscrawled,” one reporter complains. Such it had been since the reassembling of Congress.²⁷ What they did hear were rumors that the Capital was to be moved. The flies, the bad food in the hotel, were telling. The summer heat of Alabama did not add to the comfort of the statesmen. Other plans were considered. The Virginia Convention, however, had passed a resolution inviting “the President of the Confederate States and the constituted authorities of the Confederacy, whenever in their opinion the public interest or convenience may require it, to make the city of Richmond or some other place in this State the seat of the

Government of the Confederacy;"²⁸ and the newspapers had commented editorially on the fitness of such a move. Virginia undoubtedly was to be the theater of the war. Richmond and Washington were to become the objectives of the armies. By the end of May the Confederate Government was in Richmond, and to some students it is still a question if that were not one of the initial mistakes of the Confederacy, for its real strength lay in the Lower South because of the Mississippi Valley.²⁹

The President, already worn with work and the beginnings of criticism that had hummed about him at Montgomery, was hailed by his people all along the way to Richmond. Unknown to them as he was, he caught their pride when he appeared at the stations when the train stopped, and made speeches. He was their leader in this new order. When he reached Richmond and had crossed so much territory of the Confederacy, meeting enthusiasm all the way, he could feel his people were behind him. But it was not for long.

1861-1863

THE inauguration of Mr. Lincoln passed off in the routine manner the function prescribes save for the picturesque incident of Mr. Douglas averting an awkward moment when the President was looking for a place to put his hat, by rising and taking it from him. It was the sort of reassuring gesture that results when a diplomat calls upon the head of the Government to which he is accredited as indicating the direction his country's sympathy is likely to move in a moment of strained relations with another. There was a ball as part of the ceremony and Monsieur Mercier, the French Minister, thought apparently he could give his Government no better idea of the type of man the new President was than by informing his Foreign Office that this ball, given in Mr. Lincoln's honor, "*qu'il disait être le premier de sa vie où il fut allé.*"¹

The inaugural at Montgomery a month earlier had established Davis in his new office with even more acclaim. It was to be some weeks later before criticism was directed against him. Lincoln had become accustomed to criticism even before he reached Washington. Both men were in the struggles of Cabinet-making. Both had political acknowledgments to make and the rumors and rumbles of the oncoming war went on in the two capitals.

At Montgomery the Government decided upon sending the Commission to Washington in the hope, Davis says, "of

establishing friendly relations with the United States and effecting an equitable settlement of all questions relating to the common property of the States and the public debt." But the days went into weeks and the commissioners were unable, as we saw, to establish any communication beyond "filed" memoranda.

Seward in the meantime devised a plan of creating a foreign war with any of the Powers—France, Spain, England or Russia—in the hope that such an enterprise would bring the North and South together. Happily, it never passed the plan stage. It was an exhibition of an effort in a foreign policy that put him in a class quite by himself as a Secretary of State.

In Richmond a Convention had been sitting since February, which was vainly seeking a solution of the problem; the part the great State of Virginia was to play. The strength of the Confederacy would depend upon Virginia's secession. No Southerner ever believed Virginia could be coerced. The Secession element was vigorous, but there was strong Unionist sentiment among the delegates—a majority, in fact, were Unionists. The proceedings of the Convention constituted news of the first importance, and as such were given precedence to all other matter in the papers. The readers of the Richmond *Dispatch* had to turn to the third page opposite the editorial to read the caption "The War Begun" when Sumter was bombarded. The boasting type of "scare" headlines awaited another era. By the third day Virginia had seceded, and the war became news. It now occupied the first page. That day the caption was "The Civil War," but the following day simply "The War."² Davis said that once "in the hurry of writing he had spoken of the war as 'the Civil War,' but had never used that misnomer again."³ It was, as the

eminent Virginian John Y. Mason said, who served the United States as Minister to France, "a war of sentiment and opinion by one form of society against another form of society." ⁴

It began when Major Anderson knew his men would be starved out at Fort Sumter. That would be within forty-eight hours. The relief expedition of supplies making down the coast was bringing "bread to Anderson" and Lincoln notified the Governor of South Carolina that such was the case. Davis at Montgomery learned this from General Beauregard on April 8. Notwithstanding the aid of the telegraph it was April 10 when General Beauregard had his orders from Montgomery to demand the evacuation of Fort Sumter, with the further and more important instruction to fire upon it, to reduce it, if this were refused. When word reached Montgomery that in his reply Major Anderson had said he would be starved out in forty-eight hours—the orders were explicit to "avoid the effusion of blood." A second refusal of evacuation on Anderson's part, although he offered a compromise, led the Confederate officers, sent by General Beauregard, to disregard his communication which said that he would evacuate the fort "by noon of the 15th instant" unless he were reënforced or had contrary instruction from his Government. There seemed too many possibilities—this rumored bread-bringing fleet—so the zero hour was set without referring Anderson's statement to Davis. At four-thirty on the morning of April 12, the firing began. On Sunday afternoon, the 14th, Major Anderson reports he marched out of the fort "with colors flying and drums beating, bringing away company and private property, and saluting my flag with fifty guns." ⁵ Such a conclusion could be

only because General Beauregard made possible the honors of war.

If Congressmen and Senators and civilians generally drove out to Manassas to watch that battle, fashion and beauty crowded the battery at Charleston to see the bombardment of Sumter. There were no casualties on either side. South Carolina had begun the War as she did secession, and the pride of victory made it a moment when there could be rejoicing. Mr. Roger Pryor had achieved his purpose. His speech in Charleston where, doubtless, he had gone "to fire the Southern heart," was heeded. "I will tell you, gentlemen, what will put Virginia in the Southern Confederacy in less than an hour by Shrewsbury clock—strike a blow."⁶ The Virginia Convention would now come to an end, and Virginia would no longer be in the Union. It was all most promising and Charleston was celebrating. It was like Paris in the Revolution of 1848, Russell of the *London Times* thought. Cases of champagne and claret, and French pâtès, were about the tents on the island at Sumter. The celebration was going on there as well as on the mainland.

At the North, unity of purpose was achieved. Lincoln's uncouth ways were forgotten in the desire to respond to his call for 75,000 volunteers. Davis at Montgomery answered with the offer to issue Letters of Marque, to be followed by Lincoln's declaring a blockade of the Southern ports in all the States which had then seceded, to which he added Virginia and North Carolina a week later. Privateers⁷ were to be held by the laws of the United States for the prevention of piracy, and all that remained was the decimating of life and youth and treasure in the broad reaches of a great land through four long years, because people will do that for their souls' sake.

Virginia's early example of refusing the quota of troops Lincoln's call required brought her decision swiftly. Davis and his Cabinet were at rest. The great Old Dominion was with the Confederacy, and the gentlemen at Montgomery were already planning a change of capitals. The Vice-President, Stephens, was to be sent to Richmond at once as Commissioner, a circumstance that led the Richmond *Dispatch* to comment that his coming is "authoritatively understood" to mean that he is to assume the administration of the Government, "while President Davis, ready to die upon his country's war fields, is to go as Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the South."⁸ It was the wish father to the thought.

Before spring had run into summer the other States which were to secede had joined the Confederacy. The month of May saw Arkansas, Tennessee, by a military alliance, and North Carolina, come under the Stars and Bars. Davis' native State, Kentucky, in the end failed him, and remained in the Union. Missouri, one source of the welter of oratory on the slavery question in Congress, compromised with herself and followed two flags but did not leave the Union. And the pitiless demands of war went on.

The spring days brought as much anxiety in the one capital as the other. Equipment was lacking on both sides, but the determination to go on with what had been undertaken knew no dividing line. Both Davis and Lincoln knew the war would be a long one. Davis had warned of that early and, like a good soldier, did not underestimate the enemy. He told Mrs. Chesnut that before the end came the South would have many a bitter experience; that only fools doubted the courage of the Yankees or their willingness to fight when they saw fit. He told her too that after his experience in Mexico with the fighting qualities of the Southerners he

knew that all that could be done by pluck, muscle, endurance, and dogged courage, dash and red-hot patriotism, would be done. And yet, she says, "his tone was not sanguine, there was a sad refrain running through it all." But he laughed "at our faith in our own powers. We are like the British. We think every Southerner equal to three Yankees at least. We will have to be equivalent to a dozen now." ⁹

Such was, in fact, the buoyant, eager will of the South and its Army to be and to do.

It was a day in late May when Richmond became the seat of Government of the Confederacy. The press welcomed Davis and praised his ability and character. Stress was laid on the advantage it was to have a man of his military skill and experience as the Chief Executive. There was sympathy for him too, for he was worn from the work of organizing and directing the innumerable details of his Government. His mastery of details, his thoroughness in any undertaking, and his "iron will," all were praised. It was a satisfaction that a suitable house had been selected which was to be known as the White House of the Confederacy, and where in the four years of war he was to know the heights of praise, the depths of censure and tragic personal sorrow, and to measure in his own mind the rewards of ambition.

The office seekers, the stir as of some great occupation, changed the quiet of the city on the seven hills to the hum of a capital and a military camp. Organization of the Southern Army was going on as rapidly as the skill of its fine officers could direct. The training of West Point was capitalizing the army units to such form as would be realized when men like Lee, Albert Sidney Johnston, and the solemn teacher of mathematics, T. J. Jackson, were the officers. Day by day it was hoped that the training would cease. Action

and results were what the people were clamoring for North and South. A Richmond paper¹⁰ sought to satisfy its readers and for a number of days carried as a leader the following:

SEND US THE NEWS

Our friends in the various camps and places of rendezvous and elsewhere will confer favor by sending to us any interesting intelligence, at the earliest practicable moment for publication. We desire to keep our readers informed in regard to everything that transpires, and there will be an adequate compensation for important news.

This was a type of military intelligence that ceased after a time. The whole country had to be educated to this business of war.

Slavery as a forensic subject for the moment had drifted away. The abolition of the African Slave trade in the Constitution of the Confederate States had been raised like a banner to catch the eye of England. It might easily become a bait for recognition. In any event the whole aspect of the "peculiar institution" would best be kept in the background. The occupation in the South was the two-fold one of putting the machinery of government in operation as well as the building up of an army. It was an overwhelming task and the burden of it lay upon the President. Public clamor in the North was "On to Richmond," that of the South that Washington must be taken. The herds of cattle brought to the latter city and pastured on the grounds of the Smithsonian Institution indicated army rations. The city was making ready for the advance the officers of Government and civilians alike believed to be coming. Washington, so experienced a soldier as General Scott believed, was likely to be

surrounded on all sides and quickly. In the meantime the quotas from the States were coming group after group with such interruptions as the firing upon the Sixth Massachusetts when passing through Baltimore, and the breaking of railway communications with the North by burning the railroad bridges, and the destruction of much material at the Navy Yard at Gosport. But in those early days to the President at Washington it seemed the troops were coming too slowly if Washington were to be saved.

In Richmond the Confederate President made his view more positive every day that the Southern Army should not be used as one of aggression. It was being organized for defense. Any attempt to invade the South would show the will and purpose of her people. His Congress had passed an Act in early May recognizing the existence of war between the United States and the Confederate States, but the meaning was, in the view of the South, that invasion threatened and should be met to the last ounce of power the South had.

In the organization of the Army of the Confederate States the term of enlistment was twelve months unless sooner discharged, as against that of three months in the Union Army. Great emphasis was laid upon the States offering troops or such organizations as might volunteer, but the President of the Confederacy, with the consent of Congress, was to appoint such general officer or officers as might be necessary for the services.¹¹ It was reminiscent of good Cavalier doctrine. It lay with the King alone, this power to appoint to military command and to give orders to the forces.¹² Cavaliers and Roundheads had made a Civil War in England on the point. Before the four years were done, such a result might have come in the Confederacy itself, so

loath were the States to give their forces to the Confederate Army. They were essential to home defense.

The Confederate Congress made a recommendation on March 16, 1861, of special interest. It was that the States should "cede the forts, arsenals, navy-yards, dock-yards and other public establishments within their respective limits to the Confederate States."¹⁸ The principle, of course, was one on which the United States operated. In the case of the Confederate Government, the fact was to be accomplished by the consent of the States.

The housing of the Government at Richmond went rapidly on. The executive offices were in the Treasury Buildings, on the corner of Bank Street, a short walk from the President's House. The members of his Cabinet were close by, to be summoned as need be. When Davis arrived, General Lee's activities as the head of the Army of Virginia had been directed towards making ready for the threatened invasion. General Joseph E. Johnston, with his forces, was placed at Harper's Ferry to guard the Shenandoah Valley. General Beauregard had been brought from South Carolina and was stationed at Manassas, on the highway from Washington to Richmond. The Peninsula that lay between the York and the James Rivers was the bulwark to ward off approach from the sea. General Huger and General Magruder had this responsibility. But it was to be General Beauregard who was first to gain acclaim here in Virginia.

The "Anaconda policy" of General Scott which was to be scoffed at, had its indication when General McClellan moved with his Ohio volunteers into western Virginia. The so-called "battle" of Philippi made him talked about, but not as he was to be later. General Patterson, with his force, was sent to Harper's Ferry to keep a watchful eye on General

Johnston now the guardian of the Shenandoah Valley. General McDowell's place was at Washington. It only remained for the age-long prod of politicians and newspapers to bring about a battle. This clamor that there be action was averted as long as possible by General Scott, who, as a Regular, knew the forces assembled around Washington were an army in the making and not one made. General Scott was thought to be too old for his task. It is true he disliked to be aroused from his nap to be told of the dispatches from Bull Run, even when it was the Commander-in-Chief of the United States Army who came to talk the matter over. When General Scott was awake he probably was thinking of the 1600 Regulars who were among the 30,000 men General McDowell had brought out from Washington. Perhaps in his sleep he still thought of them.

It was hours later when the word came through of the rout, of that mass of stragglers, of carriages with Senators and Congressmen; of newspaper men in crowds; of the rabble who had come on foot or in anything that moved on wheels to see this grim thing of battle. It was to be called "a bloody Derby" and a "military picnic," and the rout of McDowell's army in full retreat to Centreville, except the Regulars, through the ruck of accoutrements, wagons, the wounded, teamsters and, in large numbers, the observers, will always invite description. What emerged from the heat, the dust and the confusion of that hot July Sunday was that the North had lost a battle, and the South an opportunity to try to take Washington. The day following the battle, when Washington was still in hopeless confusion with the returning wagons, ambulances, sutlers' carts, a still surging mass with the soldiers wandering about, an effigy of Jefferson Davis was found hanging on a tree.¹⁴ In the long months of in-

activity of the Army after the battle, the South had leisure to remember some fine things. A cavalry officer named J. E. B. Stuart had done away with some Zouaves on one side of Henry House Hill. After the battle his pursuit of the disordered mass that cluttered the road to Centreville led beyond that, for the cry "the Cavalry, the Cavalry!" carried the men further in fear and flight. Past Centreville the horsemen were apocryphal.

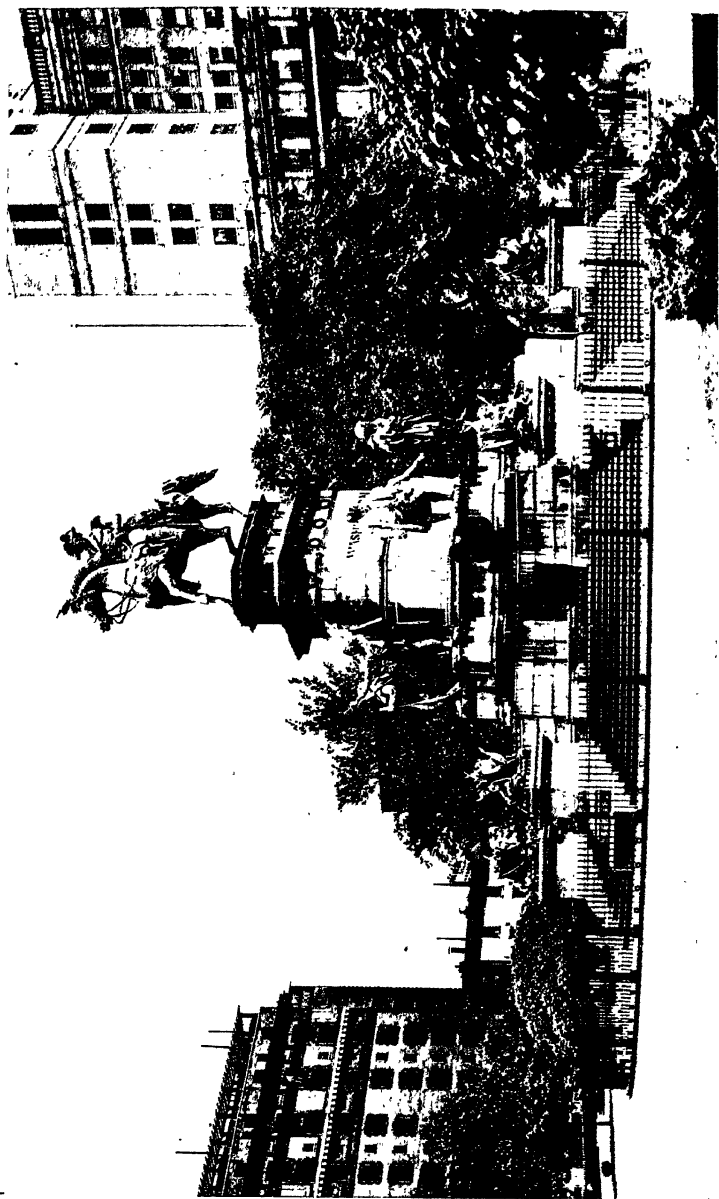
But the "apparent freshness" of the United States forces at Centreville was one reason General Joseph Johnston assigned for not advancing on Washington. On the other side of Henry House, an officer standing with his men among the pines heartened them with the famous order "to give them the bayonet" as the rush of the Federal troops came up the hill. After that he was "Stonewall" Jackson.

Later in the day he seems to have done, unwittingly, what no power in any extremity, knowingly, could induce him to do. He disobeyed an order, an order given by his highest superior officer. But he did not know that. A gentleman in civilian clothes rode up to a number of men who were standing near Stonewall Jackson when he was being treated for a small wound. The civilian gentleman was urging the men to return to their duty. Stonewall Jackson dealt very sharply with this intruder. He told him that the men were his soldiers and theirs was the victory.¹⁵ The President of the Confederacy had not been recognized. Davis' attendance at the battle was part of his vanity, part of the soldier wish that was always first in his thoughts. He had planned to be present throughout the battle but General Beauregard had thwarted that, sensing as early as this that Davis took to its fullest significance the power the Confederate Constitution gave him as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of

the Confederate States. General Beauregard desired no interference.

The Confederate Congress had been assembled on July 20 in the new capital of Richmond and Davis states that his presence on that occasion and the delivery of a message was required by *usage* and law. As the Provisional Congress of the Confederate States had been in existence only since February and had adjourned on April 29, until this date, unless the President should otherwise direct, the word *usage* seems unnecessary. For whatever reason, he was detained and did not reach Bull Run until some three or four hours before the close of the battle. The slow-moving train brought him to the junction at Manassas where, for the first time in the war, he heard the guns. The group of men about the station showed the unmistakable signs of panic.¹⁶ There were stories going about of a grave defeat. It required Davis' authority and persuasion to force the conductor of the train which had brought him to detach the engine and run it to Army headquarters where he would find a horse to ride, and where he would see his two Generals, Beauregard and Johnston.

His arrival on the field furnished exhilarating paragraphs for the Southern papers. The President of the Confederacy announced to his Secretary of War a complete and decisive victory near Manassas. The Charleston *Courier* paid stirring tribute in a leader under the title "Our President." It likened him to "Washington in modern history and to Epaminondas in ancient history." It pointed out the President in his dual capacity of political soldier. One day he addressed an august assembly of legislators, the next he was leading a daring and devoted Army to a decisive victory.¹⁷ It was believed at first that his arrival on the field at a critical moment had turned the tide in favor of the Southern Army.



THE STATUE OF WASHINGTON AT RICHMOND WHERE JEFFERSON DAVIS DELIVERED HIS

A correcting paragraph was published later that he did not leave Richmond in time to have reached the battlefield for this achievement. The correspondent had not heard of an officer named Thomas Jonathan Jackson, and his men. Davis' telegram to his wife was very simple. "It is a great victory."¹⁸

On his return to Richmond the crowds about his hotel demanded a speech. The correspondent of the *Mercury* gives the main points of this address. When the President arrived on the field, the issue was in doubt, but "being recognized as the representative of their principle, the wounded waved their handkerchiefs and cried, 'There's Jeff Davis!' which created wild enthusiasm in our ranks and a panic in the ranks of the enemy. From that moment the victory was secured. . . . He passed high eulogies upon Johnston and Beauregard."¹⁹

The vivid account of Davis saving the day had evidently been drawn from the Richmond press. The anti-Administration *Mercury* points it out as an example of the way the papers in Richmond toadied to the President.

Davis many years after in his apologia recalls with gratification the way the wounded received him and his officers on their arrival.²⁰

In the chaotic days immediately following Bull Run, Stanton, who within a year was to be Lincoln's second Secretary of War, let his attachment to Buchanan supersede any duty or activity exacted of him, for he readily found leisure to write him, on July 25, his opinion of "the dreadful disaster." "It is not unlikely that some change in the Navy and War departments may take place, but none beyond these two departments until Jefferson Davis turns out the whole concern." Stanton had very little hope that the Administra-

tion could accomplish anything. So much did Buchanan and Stanton have in common. "The capture of Washington seems now to be inevitable," he continued. "During the whole of Monday and Tuesday it might have been taken without any resistance. . . . Even now I doubt whether any serious opposition to the entrance of the Confederate forces could be offered. . . . It is certain that Davis was in the field on Sunday, and the Secessionists here assert that he headed in person the last victorious charge."²¹

The rumors of difficulties with Davis and his General as well as with his Cabinet were now well pronounced. The failure to follow up the Manassas victory with an advance to Washington became the topic of dispute for civilian and military alike. The civilians believed the war ended. Yankee boasting had been silenced, and there had passed into Southern speech, as indicating speed, a new expression, "Manassas time,"²² which matched very well Lord Palmerston's wit of "Yankee's Run."

Davis, for the moment, could put aside the sharp criticism that was beginning to reach him, that the failure to have the victorious Southern Army march on Washington was due to him. The elation the South felt worked for inertia in making preparations for the war, and the humiliation the North felt worked for activity to reverse a defeat. Notwithstanding the number of foreigners supposedly in the Union Army, the majority was of Anglo-Saxon blood, and Anglo-Saxons usually play a return match.

As a matter of fact, Davis did write out an order to General Bonham the night after the battle, which would have sent the Confederates off to Washington. On learning that the information he had about the Federal Army was not exact, the decision was not to be made till the following day.

The weather, as is not infrequently the case, settled a matter of history. The windswept and storm-racked English Channel accounted in part for the destruction of the Armada. "*He blew and they were scattered*"; the muddy fields of Waterloo kept Blücher and his troops back till evening. The rainfall at Manassas went into history. A torrential down-pour made the roads unfit to move an army. The various commands were too scattered. They too were raw troops, as well as McDowell's Army, and before they could be assembled it was too late. "It was rain such as is only known in semi-tropical lands," wrote Mrs. Chesnut.²³ Manassas had done something else. It went quite a way toward equipping the Confederate Army, so much material was left in the flight to the other side of the Potomac. Another thing had happened—the Yankees heard the Rebel Yell; Stonewall Jackson's order to his men beside "give them the bayonet," had been, "When you charge, yell like furies!"

The first effect of victory upon Davis was an *idée fixe*, which hampered his plans throughout the war and was as serious in its results to the Confederate cause as the failure to advance on Washington. There would be immediate recognition by England of the Confederacy. He used the idea as a hope for success, and when there was failure he used it to explain why further action was unnecessary. And when the recognition never came, he used the idea as explaining that only his proud belief in keeping an independent South saved the Confederacy from becoming a vassal of England. It was an unfortunate foreign policy that had a bad reflex on domestic matters.

The news of Bull Run in London brought out English opinion and sustained Davis in his belief. England saw that the squirearchy across the sea bore happy resemblance

to her own. At the moment she threw her weight of enthusiasm with the winner. She did the same thing after Antietam. Charles Francis Adams wrote, "I cannot conceal from myself the fact that as a whole the English are pleased with our misfortunes."²⁴ But Davis was justified in his belief that England's recognition might come at any moment. There was, however, that troublesome Proclamation of Neutrality of May and that matter of excluding Confederate privateers from British ports. In short, neutrality is only acceptable when, unlike the quality of mercy, it is strained—in your favor.

Through the summer months and on into autumn Davis coped with the jealousies of his Cabinet and his Generals. On July 24 Mrs. Chesnut wrote in her diary, "Now I could be happy but this Cabinet of ours are in such bitter quarrels among themselves—everybody abusing everybody."²⁵ The time of withdrawals had come. Toombs, fatigued with the directions of his Chief, and with only sporadic foreign matters for his attention—he is said to have declared that he carried the Archives of the Department of State in his own hat²⁶—went into uniform with the straps of a Brigadier-General. The Secretary of War, Leroy P. Walker, was in the field by September, commissioned a Brigadier-General, too. Mr. Walker was the first of the five Secretaries of War Davis had. It should have been, of course, one of the most important Cabinet positions, perhaps the most important. But the duties of the office were those most familiar and acceptable to the President himself, and he never wanted a man of outstanding ability to have it. It was a clerkship's job in the brief years of the Confederacy.

Cabinet disagreements gave way to difficulties with of-

ficers. Criticism followed swiftly on after the victory. There was a shortage of ammunition. Disease was taking more men in the unsanitary camps than battles could, and even before the end of the summer the blockade had told. The rumor across the Potomac was of a large army in the making. The work of making it had been given to General McClellan the day after Bull Run. Organization went on. There were to be no more advances without a trained army. By November there was still inaction on the Washington side of the Potomac but General McClellan had superseded General Scott.

On the Virginia side General Johnston's army was inactive, because Davis was listening with strained ears to the longed for word of recognition from England. He further never wished the South to be aggressor. The war had been undertaken as a means of defense. "We have taught them [the Federals] a lesson in their invasion of the sacred soil of Virginia," he had said after Manassas. His insistence was to await another invasion.

At the North, Congress had authorized the President to call for 500,000 volunteers for three years' service. This was on July 4. Manassas was the best recruiting impulse the North could have had. By November General McClellan knew his army counted 168,000 men.

The early months of 1862 were drab ones for the South. Yet before the year was done it was to be accounted the great one of the War. The rain that drenched the crowd in Capitol Square where Jefferson Davis was making his second inaugural address, but his first as a duly elected executive, matched the mood of the people. It was, he told them, the darkest hour of the Confederacy. Fort Donelson had fallen,

and before that Fort Henry. The Western front had broken, and a Union General had been given a name by his men because of the terms he asked, and because his initials made it possible—Unconditional Surrender Grant.

In the State Capitol when Davis appeared and took his seat in the Speaker's chair there was a general murmur of applause, but whether the occasion or the man checked the people there were no cheers. When the crowd, gathered out in the Square around the Washington Monument, saw him, then the cheering began. His plain black suit—he more often wore gray—made his pallor the more marked. There was trace of emotion, as there was of will. He felt the responsibility of his office, but gave the impression of his determination and ability to meet its demands.

The procession to the Monument was through a sea of umbrellas. The ceremonies were brief. The Bishop of the Diocese of Virginia made a prayer. When Davis rose there was cheering. But there was nothing inspiring nor hopeful in the message he could give the crowds. He could tell them, however, something unique in the experience of any Executive. He was "the unanimous choice of the people" who had called him to his exalted office. He chided foreign nations because they had acquiesced in a "pretended blockade," depriving themselves of a commercial outlet, with the result that the Confederacy would fast become self-supporting and independent. The disasters now upon them, he believed, would lead to increased resistance.

The House assembled directly after the ceremony, but seems to have accomplished no business. It acted on a Member's suggestion that they adjourn because their coats and feet were wet.²⁷ There was some discussion as to whether the President's inaugural address should be printed, and a

resolution to that effect was introduced. A Member said he had great respect for the President, but he supposed the speech would be printed anyhow, but if it were true that there was no copy in the possession of the House, how could it be printed? It was indicative of the public mind which already showed some indifference, if not active opposition, to their President. The people were as well indifferent to the defense of Richmond. That was to change in a few brief weeks.

This man, so often said to be like Calhoun (but now more often like Wilson), at this crisis accomplished two things that were among his real achievements. Within a few weeks, at his urging, the Confederate Congress passed a Conscription Act and Robert E. Lee became military adviser to the President.

In his inaugural address Davis had chided the North for its destruction of civil liberty, the suspension of the writ of *habeas corpus* and other restrictions. At the South every right of the peaceful citizen had been maintained notwithstanding a "war of invasion," he had told them. Yet within a short time he was demanding of his own Congress power to exercise this same suspension.

But he was soon to find himself forced to do the things for which he had so sharply criticized Lincoln. And soon the declaration of martial law in Richmond and its environs became necessary. War powers were as essential for one executive as for the other.

The Conscription Act of the South anticipated that of the North by a year—it was Jefferson Davis who brought about the first Conscription in the United States—but in neither North nor South was it done with so little disturbance as when Mr. Wilson issued his Proclamation on the Selective

Draft Act of 1917. The finely chosen word "Selective" subdued the ugly word "Draft," and was far less harsh than "Conscription." But all three secured the result desired. They hastened men to the colors. Mr. Wilson stressed the point in his Proclamation that unity of purpose would alone serve the nation. "A nation," he said, "needs all men: but it needs each man, not in the field that will most pleasure him, but in the endeavor that will best serve the common good. Thus though a sharp-shooter pleases to operate a trip-hammer for the forging of great guns and an expert machinist desires to march with the flag, the nation is served only when the sharp-shooter marches and the machinist remains at his levers.

"The whole nation must be a team, in which each man shall play the part for which he is best fitted."²⁸

Davis well knew that what was needed for the Confederacy was that it should be "a team." It was perhaps his most difficult task. It at once evoked the question of States Rights and challenged the theory on which the States had seceded. The Vice-President, Stephens, felt conscription to be a violation of States Rights and he never changed his view to the end.

There was much bitter criticism throughout the South as there was a year later in the North when Congress passed its first Conscription Act.

In the South the attitude was the difficult one of accepting the national idea. The notion of a Confederate Army as opposed to the idea of State Troops had been a complex one from the first. It was taking all his skill to force the idea of a Confederate National Army. Davis found that the Governors as well as the Legislatures of the States were strongly opposed to the idea that troops could be taken out of their

own State. Mr. Russell of the London *Times* believed it to be due to Davis' delicate management, and the perfect knowledge of his countrymen, that he was able to bring together "the diverse individualities of his regiments into something like a National Army."

In the year's time and in these dark hours of the Confederacy, everything must give way to the securing of replacements and the keeping up of the Army. Selfishness made profiteers and strikers grow up in the South as well as in the North. It was one of the drags that Jefferson Davis had to overcome. The constitutionality of the law was doubted and resisted. But in the spring days of 1862 it brought together the men of the South for the defense of Richmond, just as it served the Army at Antietam and at Fredericksburg. A man to be a man in the South had to be in uniform. And there were men in the South. Substitution, in abuse, came a year later.

By 1864, the military service age was from seventeen to fifty. Davis could indeed say he was "grinding the seed corn of the Confederacy." Industry suffered too, through the workers being conscripted, but resorting so often to substitution, so that the War Department was finally called upon to supply labor from the Army. Men were detailed to carry on certain necessary industries.²⁹ It was a type of organization that could come only as a final recourse.

The last years of the War brought out men of inferior quality in both armies. The best had gone at the first summons. The planter class, the aristocrats of the South, were well aware what they must give to win their cause. They gave their all, and then knew grief only when there was no more to give.

The first Conscription Act called for men between the ages

of eighteen and thirty-five, but with specified classes of exemption. Ministers, conscientious objectors, railway employees, apothecaries, teachers, to which later were added editors, printers and plantation overseers, at the rate of one to every twenty negroes,³⁰ and numerous other classes, made a long list. It also made a name for the law, the "twenty nigger law." In the last years of the War when the Governors of the States made the exemptions to cover almost any one they chose as a mark of States Rights, there were many men of military age and capacity not in service. In Georgia alone it was estimated that there were more men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five then in their homes than had gone into the Confederate Service.³¹

The Confederate Congress found itself with new problems to face. These exemptions pitted class against class. Exempting editors and printers was indication of the attitude the Confederacy held towards the press. Its "freedom" was undisturbed. Right in Richmond itself the anti-Administration papers went on in their attacks on Davis, unchecked. Indeed no newspaper was suppressed by Government order in the South.³² In the case of the editor of the *Raleigh Standard*, soldiers wrecked his printing plant when he became a peace-at-any-price man in 1864, running for Governor on such a plank. His civilian subscribers took up the fight by wrecking the rival strong Administration organ.³³ Nor was there censorship. The telegraph was censored in the North, but the word "censorship" is wholly missing from the index of the Government Documents of the Civil War period. It is not found either in the Index of the Official Records of the Civil War nor in that of the *Congressional Globe*.³⁴ It is a word unlikely where civil liberties are thought to be guarded.

The "freedom" of the press supplied the Generals of both armies with valuable information. Criticism of officials was more prevalent than news, but there was no rebuke. Treasonable matter was dealt with in court-martials, but the criticism of action was neither discouraged nor noticed. These dark hours of the Confederacy were productive of attacks upon their President and the newspapers led the way. There was criticism of the secret sessions of the Confederate Congress. It meant that pressure was all on the side of the Executive, and that public opinion was not permitted to interfere. Criticism took some such form as this. The President was thought not to have surrounded himself in his Cabinet with the strong men of the South; he was urged to leave strategy to the Commanding Generals of the Confederate Armies, to see that their needs were met and to reward or punish them according to their conduct of the war. Were this done "the South would very soon be redeemed from the present position of depression, difficulty and danger, into which, by mismanagement and a great want of foresight, she has been thrust," was the *Mercury's* ³⁵ view. The *Mercury* laid the blame squarely on the President. "Should he surround himself by flatterers and sycophants and hug to himself the delusion of his being a great and universal genius; should he assume to control and direct the whole machinery of the Government of which he is the elected head, and should Congress sit in secret session, aiding and abetting the Executive whether in wisdom or in folly, while the people whose servants they all profess to be are kept wholly in the dark as to the doings of their Government, then matters will not be in train for improvement."

Then too, the people were impatient of delay and wanted action. They were "incredulous of a long war."

It had been the intention to have a ball following the military parade and ceremonies of the Inauguration, but it was abandoned because the news from the front was too serious. Instead, Mr. and Mrs. Davis gave a reception at their house in Clay Street. The world and his wife came and many also quite unknown in the society of the Capital. The large drawing rooms and dining room giving on the gallery that ran along the front of the house were spacious and had the dignity of an official residence. They have dignity now as the Confederate Museum where many of the things then in use still remain. The crowd that came and went this night found their President approachable. There was less of the customary haughtiness. In the Washington days, he had been indifferent to social life. To make the effort now in the stress of the war was even more difficult. But he went among his guests a little more unbendingly. From the pressure of the work, the heart-racking demands of the war, he had no recoil. He never understood that release which Lincoln found in humor nor was he ever able to give to the casual person whom he met the quality of charm that his family and kin found in him always. He suffered from the vagaries and exactions of the neurasthenic. And not the least part of his tragedy was that he was placed in a position to tear his nerves relentlessly. The position called out bitter and often unreasoned criticism. Yet this was a man who could not endure even a child's rebuke.

In Washington, on the same night, the illumination of the Public Buildings which was customary on Washington's Birthday was abandoned because of the death of Lincoln's son, Willie, two days before. There had been planned also another ceremony. An order had been issued from the War

Department, by direction of President Lincoln, that immediately following the reading of Washington's Farewell Address in the House of Representatives on Washington's Birthday, "the Rebel flags lately captured by the United States Forces shall be presented to Congress by the Adjutant-General to be disposed of as Congress may direct."³⁶ But, happily, in the interests of good taste, this was abandoned also.

M. Mercier, whose communications to his Government were constant and voluminous, informed the French Foreign Office of the circumstances and approved the change. The Diplomatic Corps were to be present for the reading of what M. Mercier called *le testament politique du Père de la Patrie*,³⁷ with the exception of the British Legation, who had given as the reason for their absence the mourning for Prince Albert. In Washington as well as in Richmond the 22nd of February that year was not a moment for celebration.

Now nearly seventy years after, when there are ceremonies of captured flags to be held at Washington, it is because they are being returned to the States of the South whose regiments carried them. The State of Maine recently returned six taken from Virginia, North Carolina and Texas.

Richmond had become a city filled with changes. All the rabble of profiteers, office-seekers, doubtful venders, were making this peaceful city a place distorted with the drive of war. The Richmond correspondent of the Charleston *Mercury* declared that by the beginning of 1862 even the Members of Congress were dissatisfied with it as a capital. They found the Virginians unsocial, and the trades people were "conscienceless extortioners." It was said that it was a "war of contractors." Some of the Western papers were calling it that, and adding that it would not end while anything

could be made of it. The stress and strain of it all were beginning to tell, but its most significant effect was that Davis no longer held his people. The delusion that recognition of Southern independence by European Powers was all that was needed to terminate the war was the talk among the ruling class, as the talk of not ending it as long as there was anything to be made out of it was the talk of the man in the street. There was criticism of the Richmond *Enquirer*, the Administration organ, for its fulsome praise of Davis, and a contemporary chided it on its "bitterest irony" in comparing the President to Washington. It suggested to the *Enquirer* that if it could "explain the reasons of the Executive in vetoing every measure not suggested by himself, and some that were, as, for example, the bill creating the office of Commanding General, it would do the country a service." What the country did not know was how intense the feeling was growing between Davis and his Congress. He used his power of veto many times in the four years, thirty-eight times in fact, and his Congress retaliated by passing all the bills but one over his veto.³⁸

The critical Members of Congress were eager to satisfy their constituents—all were familiar with the fact that broken fences had to be mended—and they passed legislation which would have made furloughs on a physician's authority possible. The army would have had about 30,000 men on leave at a time.³⁹ Davis vetoed this at once. He clung to the idea that everything pertaining to the military must come under Executive direction. He said of Congress that it should "keep within the bounds of law and common sense,"⁴⁰ a circumstance that conceivably might explain the thirty-seven bills passed over his veto.

The spring campaigns brought little more of cheer. Davis

was to lose one of his most able commanders and a friend. His aloofness, about which there was so much comment and which came in part perhaps from arrogance, was wholly lacking with a friend. Albert Sidney Johnston never came within his criticism. He was to him "the richly endowed soldier." His soldier death at Shiloh, after leading his charge successfully, was a deep wound to Davis.

The two days' fighting at Shiloh mounted up the waste of men. The first day's success was with the Confederate Army. On a hilltop the Union Army held their ground, while a Confederate order came, "Cease firing." The customary torrential rain fell. There were more hours of fighting, but neither Beauregard nor Grant pursued. The Confederate Army was drawn back to Corinth. The Union Army under Grant remained at Pittsburg Landing and there was a lull long enough for abuse of Grant to be piled high. What the Confederate President was remembering was that he had lost a friend, and the South a fine commander.

Shiloh was one of the hardest blows to the South. And Tennessee, which only the year before had given over the control of the State militia to Jefferson Davis, and had invited the Confederate Government to make Nashville the capital of the Confederacy, from now on could hardly again be called a Southern State. It was a tragic hour for the South, and it seemed to make more certain that the Western front was lost to the Confederacy. The appeal of Davis to the Governors of the States for troops this time was heeded. This was a calamity the South as a whole shared, and there was no quibbling about home defense nor waiting upon technicalities in the disposition of State troops.

The end of the month saw the fall of New Orleans. Captain Farragut and the former camel-expert, Lieutenant

Porter, had taken Forts Jackson and St. Philip where the river makes round Plaquemine Bend, with New Orleans less than a hundred miles away. The next day the flotilla moved on, the protective advance for the troops that were to take the city. A heavy rain made the old city gloomy, and a thick vapor, not unlike a London fog, hung over it, caused by the burning of the cotton and the molasses.⁴¹ But Captain Farragut's fleet had come to anchor, and at daylight the bell in the tower of old Christ Church rang out. The people knew then the city had fallen.

May Day that year was different from all others. "Beast" Butler, whose descriptive epigram furnished the Federal Government with a classification for the negro laborers at Fortress Monroe, "contraband of war," became the military governor of the city. Captain Farragut had turned it over to him after the evacuation by the Confederate forces. It was a brutal régime. Sentries were posted at all houses which were under suspicion. None knew when they were to be ordered out of their homes. The loss of the city had numerous results quite apart from the great destruction of property to insure its not coming into Union possession. The man who in the National Democratic Convention in 1860 had voted with the Massachusetts delegation fifty-seven times for Jefferson Davis, was shortly to be called by him a "felon" and ordered to be hanged. He was to be scourged in Parliament for his famous Order 28, which declared that women insulting Union soldiers should be treated as women of the street. The *London Times* was to make much of the Order as being reason enough to have no further dealings with the North, while Mr. Adams and Lord Palmerston exchanged letters remarkable in expression even for them.

New Orleans had long since lost much of its gayety. The pinch of war was felt there early, for the ships were not upon their "lawful occasions," and the blockade had shut out in the main the world commerce that came to this port, which even now is the second largest in the United States. The speech of the quays was the speech of many tongues. The men who spoke it were the rough dregs of the world's ports. It was a difficult city to put under military control. But General Butler did not remain long. The chancelleries of Europe had long thought of New Orleans as not having been really assimilated by the United States—they would take a hand in the matter, and diplomacy was called in to urge General Butler's removal. He did not leave, however, before he saw one of his orders defeated by the ladies of New Orleans. The churches in the War were as divided as the country. The President of the United States had not been prayed for in any church in the South since Sumter. It was an Army regulation that, upon the Federal troops occupying a city, a prayer for the President should be part of the Sunday service. At New Orleans, when the old rector of St. Paul's failed to carry out this order of General Butler's, the military guard posted at the church marched quickly down the aisle to place him under arrest. There resulted what came to be known as the "Battle of the Prayer-books"⁴² when the ladies of the congregation, one after another, rose from their knees and began hurling their books and hymnals at the soldiers leading the old clergyman away. The quiet of old St. Paul's had been broken sharply, but the rector knew that he had been among friends.

The fall of New Orleans, the Confederate Secretary of War conceived to be "the crowning stroke of adverse fortune."

The main theater of the war in the April days lay in the Peninsula between the York and the James River, where the McClellan aptitude for delay waiting perfection in preparation added a new anxiety to the Government in Richmond and a greater impatience to the North.

The river ways up either side of the Peninsula had made that terrain a feasible approach to Richmond. On the James River the ugly-looking craft first called the *Merrimac* and then the *Virginia* stood guard to that approach. She held it until the Confederates got some 12,000 of their forces to Richmond where General Lee needed them. The Assistant Secretary of the United States Navy referred to her as "that confounded *Merrimac*," until the *Monitor* a few weeks later in Hampton Roads neutralized her effect. And the question of ironclads had become an essential point of discussion in all future naval parleys.

When the *Merrimac* was destroyed by her own officers, shortly after the surrender of Norfolk, to prevent her falling into the hands of the United States Navy, the criticism against Davis was harsher than ever. The newspapers blamed him for this "panicky" act. He stood this blame as he did that of failing to order the troops on to Washington after Manassas in silence. He did not want the South to know the *Merrimac*, as a ship, was outclassed.⁴⁸

The Confederate Army at Yorktown with General Johnston in command began the retreat that brought a Union defeat at Williamsburg. The Army of the Potomac which McClellan wanted reënforced with some of General McDowell's forces was but seven miles away from Richmond on the Chickahominy. The church bells in Richmond could be heard in the hours of stillness.

In the city itself was confusion. The hurrying arrange-

ments for evacuation went on. The archives were packed ready to be taken to safety, to either Lynchburg or Columbia. The official family of the President, as well as those of his own household, were leaving the city. Mrs. Davis and her children had gone to Raleigh. This seemed well wide of an invading army.

When McClellan said that he would be in Richmond in ten days—it was on February 13, 1862—it was something for the politicians and the people of the North to feed upon, and at least indicated the action that was more and more being demanded. It might have interfered with the inauguration of Davis had it been accomplished. February 22 had been selected as a day peculiarly appropriate in the minds of the Southern people for the inauguration of a President of the Southern Confederacy. There was also, perhaps, the intent to popularize the President by having his inauguration in such a setting as Richmond. Doubtless it seemed a day peculiarly appropriate to a Northern General to take the enemy's capital. But McClellan was instead to conduct a campaign through the next few months that ended in his being some twenty or so miles away from Richmond, where the church bells could no longer be heard.

The lost chance at Yorktown, where he gave the Confederate Army a month's opportunity to strengthen their whole position, while he awaited the artillery coming from Washington, began the Peninsula campaign. It ended after the Seven Days' Battles when the country and the world became aware that two great soldiers, whose training had been at West Point, were in the Southern Army—Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson. And from across the sea there were many signs that Davis could feed upon his hope of European

recognition, and Mr. Gladstone's famous Newcastle speech was only two months away.

Lincoln had demoted McClellan from his position of command, second only to his own, to his old place at the head of the Army of the Potomac. It was not enough that his soldiers loved him. There was a war to be got on with, and McClellan's moment of perfection was put off too long.

His Commander-in-Chief's order to break the enemy's lines at once, prefaced with "I think you better," thus making it a suggestion, was scorned. General Johnston did evacuate Yorktown, and the Federals met a defeat at Williamsburg. It was the third week in May when he rested his forces on the Chickahominy, and anxiety began at Richmond lest there be a repetition of New Orleans.

It was the moment Davis chose to join old St. Paul's Church, and when he issued one of his many proclamations appointing a day of fasting and prayer. The *Richmond Examiner*, whose abuse of Davis was so constant, took occasion to notice the ceremony and described him as "standing in a corner telling his beads and relying on a miracle to save the country." Such criticism could scarcely have served either political or patriotic purpose.

What Davis could have reason to be thankful for was the work of two men; the strategy of Robert E. Lee and the action of Stonewall Jackson.

The lovely valley of the Shenandoah had not yet gone wholly into its summer ways. It was fertile in its rich beauty, and Jackson knew so well its every turn. The skill of his manœuvres up and down his own valley made him the idol of military men. But Davis seems never to have realized the genius of the man. Lincoln was giving far more thought to him. The dispatches from the Valley were

disconcerting. The spectacular Frémont was sent reënforcements, but at Winchester Jackson routed the Union Army under Banks. He still had his Valley. And at Washington there was what was to be known as "the great scare." ⁴⁴ The President was asking for aid from the States with their militia—recruiting had stopped by order of the Secretary of War in early April—he had taken over all the railroads, and the capital waited the threatened attack. But Stonewall Jackson could sit down and think over the month's toll. In brief, it comprised many prisoners, victories in five battles, and the men who were to have reënforced McClellan were needed to save Washington. It was a successful chess move. As a military man it should have delighted Davis. But he never used this man that military critics unite to regard as a great soldier.

What the capital at Richmond was hearing as well were the bugles in the Union lines, now being blown but six miles away, and that Robert E. Lee had been given the command of the Army of Northern Virginia. The Battle of Seven Pines, or Fair Oaks, had come and gone with its record of swaying bridges weakened with the flood stage of the Chickahominy which carried General Sumner's men across, and made the success of the Confederate Army only a partial one. The severe wounding of Joseph E. Johnston gave the command to Lee.

This preliminary encounter with McClellan left the armies quiet along the Chickahominy for a month until broken by the battle of Gaines's Mill, where the two armies were approximately of even strength. It was Lee's first battle "in direct command," and a victorious one. It was a battle for the specialists. But the book that tells of Stonewall Jackson's tactics and Lee's strategy is a textbook still

used in the British Military School, and the just Rhodes says quite simply that "no matter how many troops had been given McClellan, he could not have handled them to get the better of Lee and Jackson."⁴⁵ The campaign ended after the Seven Days' Battles and Malvern Hill, and the Peninsula campaign, which was to have been the summit of McClellan's military fame, had failed. His Corps Commanders and his men had more than done their part. He had demonstrated that he had shared with General Johnston a type of military skill which does not make for newspaper headlines but saves an army. He withdrew an hundred thousand men in safety to a point on the James where he could make signal to the gunboats. There was no longer a siege of Richmond. The South had now its hour. Richmond was safe. Lee's army was near by, "decimated," is the word sometimes used, and Davis was learning that his Conscription Act was bringing men to the colors, and, temporarily, the sharp criticisms against him ceased.

In England the Southern success was pushing the Foreign Office and the Cabinet to the point where recognition fluttered about like a balloon held tightly in the hand of the cautious Russell. Lord Palmerston might cut the string.

The pro-Southern press in England and in France hailed the success of the Southern armies. The *Quarterly Review* was showing Lord Salisbury at his most Tory best. John Bright did not think the war would soon be over and he believed that the cotton famine would last long. And in France the Emperor was listening, as is the way of silent men, to the rather fatuous utterances of Davis' Commissioner, Slidell.

The first six months of the year had been a period of great gloom for the South. Davis had lost much of his

popularity. The blockade had become "effective" in Lord Russell's definition. The half year had been difficult in every way. Now new hope came with the victories the brains of Lee had devised. Again Davis listened for the hoped-for word across the seas.

He was hearing some things to hearten him. The *Florida* was doing much to hamper the blockade, and the *Alabama* sailed from Liverpool just as the Peninsula campaign had closed.

When Davis was waiting to hear of this recognition of Southern independence, Lee was planning to make the success of Confederate arms so indubitable that negotiations could be begun on the basis of Southern independence and the war be terminated.

It was the golden moment of the Confederacy.

At the North there were the confusion and fumbling with commands while President Lincoln and his Cabinet searched among Major-Generals for one likely to lead a victorious army. It was the slavery problem which was really engrossing Lincoln.

It was on a July day that Mr. Lincoln first mentioned the subject of Emancipation as a Federal measure. When he brought the attention of the Cabinet to the draft of the Proclamation he had prepared, it was Seward who, though declaring his approval, thought it the wrong moment to propose it. It should be issued after military victory and not at a moment of disasters.⁴⁶ The moment did not come for some weeks later. The end of August saw the defeat of Pope's Army at the Second Bull Run, as part of it had been defeated earlier in the month at Cedar Mountain. It was not long before he was relieved of his command and his services were no longer required as a General,⁴⁷ and in early September

McClellan, in spite of the opposition of the Cabinet, had been restored by the President to take command of the Army of the Potomac, and the cheering for the adored commander had begun.

Washington was again in peril. Lee was about to undertake the movement toward invasion of the North. Davis had revised his idea about aggression—for he believed Lee to be leading a victorious army—when terms could be made of his own choosing. His dream of European recognition would surely now come true. Lord Palmerston was writing Earl Russell that the Federals had “got a very complete smashing.” Was the moment perhaps opportune to recommend a possible separation of North and South? This letter is of the date of September 14. Antietam was but three days away, which Lord Palmerston fancied would surely be a Southern victory. Then it would be time for England and France to make a move. He waited the news of Antietam anxiously; but not more so than President Lincoln, who had determined were it a Northern victory to issue his Emancipation Proclamation. Antietam brought the knowledge that Lee’s successful carrying of his army into Maryland on the words of a song and, it was hoped, up the winding ways into Pennsylvania had been checked. It was to be the stroke that would end the Northern Army and make possible Southern independence. It turned out to be the one that made possible the issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation on the 22nd of September.

The golden hours of the Confederacy faded in those September days along Antietam Creek. When McClellan won the battle of South Mountain but three days before, he was on his way to Antietam, aroused with the knowledge that had been given him by the “lost dispatch” of Lee’s stating the

position of the Confederate Army as well as the outline of the march. Lee had knowledge too that it had reached McClellan and withdrew back of Antietam Creek near Sharpsburg. The day's battle that destroyed men faster than the autumn leaves were dying left a great record for the Armies. Lee's soldiers would have fought the second day. It would have meant further decimation by a larger force. Lee took his army back into Virginia by recrossing the Potomac. It had not become an invading army after all. It was all a great heroism. Lee's men were barefoot, many of them, and bleeding, but they fought to the end of that long day, those that were not lying in long rows in the corn-fields, fallen on their rifles. It was sunset time when Lee asked no more of his Army.

On the Western front General Kirby Smith had taken Lexington. Davis' great hope was that Braxton Bragg would hold off General Buell and reach Louisville. Bragg's fortune in Kentucky kept Davis' native State from joining the Confederacy. His earlier success made this later failure the more sharp.

In the Eastern area the success brought back Davis' wish to be in the field. Lee had broken his communications with Frederick when Davis wanted to join in the Maryland campaign that was to end the war. Daily Lee was hearing from his President. It required a fine skill on Davis' part to explain his change of view that sanctioned an invading army. The South had taken the offensive, but at this time the President was so hopeful of recognition in Europe he could venture the change. By December, that had changed. He was telling the Mississippi Legislature when he spoke before them in December, "‘Put not your faith in Princes,’ and

rest not your hopes on foreign nations." England had reverted by this time to a strict neutrality.

The long gray lines that held so well at Antietam were now broken. Lee was writing strange reports. He had taken every means in his power, he declared, to correct the evil of straggling.⁴⁸ The individualism of the Southerners was opposed to discipline. Even the magic power of Lee could not hold his men together in the campaign into Maryland, and he used his cavalry as "eyes of the Army" to gather in the men who for one reason or another were slipping away. He felt "the greatest concern for the future operations of the Army." Pay was not coming regularly, and by this autumn time in 1862, the eleven dollars a month, when it did come, was not worth its face value. There were things to be done at home, and the men and officers too went back to attend to them. After Antietam this happened in both armies. The men were short of rations and Lee was short enough of men at Sharpsburg to be writing to Davis in this wise: "Some immediate legislation, in my opinion, is required, and the most summary punishment should be authorized. It ought to be construed into desertion in the face of the enemy, and thus brought under the Rules and Articles of War." He reported that "the brigades of Generals Lawton and Armistead, left to guard the ford at Shepherdstown, together contained but six hundred men."⁴⁹ That marching army that went down the highway from Hagerstown, leaving its blood-stained footprints on the way like a patteran, deserved better things from these men of their own ranks. It was a problem of both armies.

Political clamor made Jefferson Davis change his Secretary of War, and the choice this time was based on personal friendship. James E. Seddon of Virginia brought tact to his

post, but not the subtlety of Benjamin. There had been a demand for Joseph E. Johnston, but this Davis resisted. It was said that General Johnston's hatred of Jefferson Davis amounted to a religion.⁵⁰ And this was nearly two years before his removal at Atlanta. The ailing Seddon made himself acceptable to the President, and he took over the duties of his office while Lee was assembling a new army after Sharpsburg.

At the North Lincoln was hearing much the same sort of thing that Davis was being told. There was press abuse on McClellan's failure to follow up Antietam with a decisive attack. The winter days were coming when it would be all quiet on the Eastern front until spring, unless there were an early attack. November days brought the end of McClellan's military command, for in late October Lee had checked with Longstreet's corps the advance of the Army of the Potomac into Virginia, and within a fortnight McClellan became little more than a civilian. They called it Lincoln's greatest mistake, as the removal of Johnston before Atlanta was said to be that of Davis.

Burnside, who had refused the President's offer to command the Army in the field as often as Braxton Bragg did that of Davis, was now in command. His plan that carried the Army across the Rappahannock with Richmond as the objective met a defeat at Fredericksburg, in December; but only after the Union infantry had crossed and recrossed an exposed plain six times, while the Confederate artillery, mounted on the heights above the river, mowed them down with great precision. After the firing had ceased the puritanical Jackson, who was accustomed to pray to his God before battles, wanted General Lee to strip his men to the waist on this bitter December night; in this way they could

be told from the men in blue and make a bayonet charge upon the Union troops in the crowded town.⁵¹ It was not Lee's idea of warfare and he refused the man whom he called "his right hand."

Fredericksburg brought only partial elation to the South. It was to be the battle that would end the war. It took both armies into winter quarters waiting the spring campaign of 1863, and it brought gloom to the North. On both sides there were signs of war weariness.

Spurred on by his Secretary of War, Davis made his first visit to the Western front. It was thought that his presence would hearten the troops. Virginia seemed far away with its fighting army and its capital of the Confederacy. He was supplied too with an idea of his Secretary's which was to place General Joseph E. Johnston in command of the Department of the Tennessee. He left shortly before the battle of Fredericksburg, and heard of it when he was with General Johnston in headquarters at Chattanooga. He had seen the troops under General Bragg at Murfreesboro where, he wrote Mrs. Davis, "the troops . . . were in fine spirits, and well supplied. . . . Much confidence was expressed in our ability to beat them [the Union troops] if they advance."⁵²

When he spoke to the crowd that gathered about his hotel at Murfreesboro he told them they must defend the soil of Tennessee to the end, that he had no anxiety about Richmond, and—again the magic hope he carried about with him like a charm—European intervention would come, and end the war.⁵³ When Lee came to him at Richmond after Fredericksburg, with plans for "an aggressive campaign," Longstreet says, he told Lee that the war was virtually over; that it was not necessary to harass the troops. And others at the Confederate Capital said that recognition by the European

Powers would come within thirty or forty days. This, however, was a view Lee did not accept.⁵⁴

When Davis reached Mississippi, and was among his own people, he told them that the attitude of the European Powers was disappointing. There was a change either of belief or information. But by the end of 1862 newspapers were not transported easily, and the Murfreesboro speech as given in the Tennessee papers doubtless did not reach Jackson. From the coast the Charleston papers went to Richmond by sea, taking four days.⁵⁵ The size of the paper had been greatly reduced. The Charleston *Mercury* for some time past had been printing only a half sheet. It was as difficult to transport the paper to the presses as it was to circulate the newspaper after it was printed.

It is impossible that by the time Davis reached either Murfreesboro or Jackson, in the third week of December, he had not heard of the English Cabinet's refusal to accept the French Emperor's proposal of a six months' armistice, and a suspension of the blockade, which would open the Southern ports to commerce. An article had appeared in the London *Times* on the 13th of November stating this, and certainly his Commissioners were well informed on the matter and would have communicated the fact, knowing that the hope of recognition had dimmed to a point where it would not brighten again. The fact that the French proposal and the British reply had been made public simultaneously⁵⁶ would settle it beyond question. Davis doubtless preferred to be more frank with his own State, which had always given him so many honors, than with the group he was seeking to encourage at Murfreesboro.

On the last day of the year he learned that the Bragg forces made good in the first day's fighting with the troops

under Rosecrans but did not move them; and that after being driven back the second day General Bragg began a retreat. It was a bad moment on the Western front. It scarcely confirmed all Davis had said to the Tennesseans but a few short days before, and his favorite, General Bragg, had disappointed him.

The tour of the Southwest which Mr. Davis had just made had been undertaken to explain his policies, a defense, in short, and to capture, if possible, his critics with the old magnetism, by the charm of his voice. He chose the capital of his State, Jackson, to make his defense. There was the failure to invade the North to be explained, and the necessity of the conscript laws, which were never popular. Doubtless mindful that at the time that Mississippi seceded a county had seceded from the State, he told them of his hope that "no conflict would arise between the States and the common cause." He was fearful that State military laws might thwart those of the Confederate Congress. The link that held the States to the Confederacy was not a strong one. He called upon them to hold the Valley of the Mississippi, and urged that Vicksburg must not fall. He said further that the South could "never, never reunite with the North, a people whose ascendants Cromwell had gathered from the bogs and fens of Ireland and Scotland."⁵⁷ Carried on by the fervor of his oratory he momentarily forgot his own simple Scotch-Irish ancestry; and he was discouraged.

At the moment his own plantation and that of his brother were under Admiral Farragut's control, whose authority now extended from New Orleans to Baton Rouge on both sides of the Mississippi.

Davis left the Southwest with General Pemberton in command of Mississippi, General Bragg in Tennessee, and Gen-

eral Johnston in command of the Department. He reached Richmond wearied and worn, and it was two months before he left his house.⁵⁸

He had had the painful experience of not being received as enthusiastically as his pride required. And he had learned or must have surmised that too many elements were working against him to be able to hold his people.

The old year went out with a defeat in the Southwest. The new year would begin with plans for some brilliant work of Lee's Army. And Davis set to work preparing his speech for the Confederate Congress.

1863-1865

THE Emancipation Proclamation had been in effect twelve days when Davis read to the Confederate Congress his speech that embodied his views upon it. He told his Congress that the measure was the most execrable "recorded in the history of guilty man," and he assured them that unless they should direct some other course as more expedient, he should turn over to "State authorities all commissioned officers of the United States that may hereafter be captured by our forces, in any of the States embraced in the Proclamation, and that they be dealt with in accordance with the laws of those States providing for the punishment of 'criminals engaged in exciting servile insurrection.' " He found in the Proclamation, however, something which would have a salutary effect. The fears of those who had apprehensions that the war might end by some reconstruction of the old Union, or some renewal of close political relations with the United States, would now be calmed. These were fears he had never shared. "The Proclamation," he declared, "affords the fullest guaranty of the impossibility of such a result." ¹

In the North the Proclamation was received not as a great document with a message to mankind, but as having given a new meaning to the strewn battlefields. When the Preliminary Proclamation had been issued in September, the effect it had in the North was shown in the November elections, notably in New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio, which turned

against the Administration. Motley wrote to his daughter of his satisfaction that the Massachusetts majority supporting Lincoln was nearly as large as the combined Democratic majority in these three States.² But what Lincoln realized was that his policy had had no support in any State west of the Hudson.³ It was therefore difficult to bring to his Congress the idea that in the Emancipation there must be gradual compensation to the owners of slaves. He would spare "both races from the evils of sudden derangement." Had this plan carried it would have been completed only thirty years ago. He had fixed the time as 1900. Lincoln was at the low point of his popularity. The Christmas season was saddened with the disaster at Fredericksburg. In the South, Murfreesboro on the last day of the old year, and the Proclamation becoming effective on the first day of the new, made the people only the more resolute to give and give their all to the end.

Through the autumn months after the Preliminary Proclamation had given notice that the Proclamation itself would be operative after January 1, the opinion in regard to it moved about like a seismograph here and abroad. There lurked in some quarters the ugly belief that it was intended to start a servile insurrection; in others that it was the Northern move to curry foreign favor; but Earl Russell thought it "a measure of war of a very questionable kind."⁴ In England the anti-slavery group now with something tangible to work upon began the more frequent meetings which gradually took place all over the United Kingdom. The English mind, receptive to the idea of abolishing slavery, found itself not functioning when asked to believe that a people would go to war to preserve the Union. The Proclamation served as an illumination to many and a way out of the confusion that

had obtained in English thought. Meetings were held by that body of English opinion in sympathy with what the Proclamation would achieve. It was not, however, until the end of the year that Davis made his sharp criticism of English official failure to recognize Southern independence.

The "high moral purpose" intent which England seized upon to hold itself as strictly neutral gave Palmerston an opportunity for his wonted wit at a meeting in Edinburgh in the early spring, when he asked his hearers, after telling of the horrors of civil war, if Scotland were in a position historically "to object to civil wars having a high moral purpose." ⁵

It was, however, mainly the artisan class that were in sympathy with the Proclamation and it was long weeks, even months, before it gained substantial support either in England or America. The meetings were not representative of official opinion. In America in the North and the Northwest, where war weariness was making talk of an armistice an indication of opinion, it met with little more support. Everywhere the Proclamation was thought to be a purely political measure, and not a world hymn in the throats of men for the ages. That took time.

But it was the condition of the armies and the form the spring campaign would take that was engaging the minds of the authorities on either side of the Potomac.

Since President Davis' return from the Southwest, he had been a sick man. His sensitiveness had been flicked upon as a wound by the consciousness that his people were against him. He was physically ill, but he suffered less acutely in that way than from the stinging criticism of his Congress and from the activities of some of the Governors in over-stressing the sovereignty of their States, about which he was hear-

ing all the time. "The nation must be a team," Woodrow Wilson said, in long after years. Davis might have said it, for he knew well the Confederacy must be, but it would have gone by the ears of Governor Brown of Georgia and Governor Vance of North Carolina unheeded. The Conscription Law and the appointment of officers were weapons of abuse directed against him that were rarely out of action.

It was the hour of pride when the whole South was aglow with Lee's victories. It was the hour to build on the hope of the armies, but it was the hour when two years of war and a blockade, no longer a paper one, were making sharp reminders of how long the trail was to the end.

In Richmond the price of food was soaring. There was some talk of disbanding part of the Army just from lack of food. The soldiers were on "half rations of meat, one quarter pound of salt, and one half pound of fresh meat, without vegetables or fruit or coffee or sugar." Clement Clay was writing this to his wife in March and cautioning her about letting this information get out. His sympathy for the clerks and subalterns in the military establishment was great, for they could not get board on their pay. The government money was beginning to be questioned. Unless it were possible soon to drive the enemy out of Tennessee and Kentucky and have the use of their granaries, he was doubtful of the outcome.⁶ It was the thought of many and it was a problem the Cabinet was facing as to whether support of the Army was to be sent to the Western front, or, as Lee desired and counseled, that his Army be left intact for the advance into Pennsylvania which was then the plan in the making for the Army of Northern Virginia. Then, even with an abundance of foodstuffs, there was the question of getting it from one place to another. It was the old story of transportation.

There was too the fear of Confederate money, how much it would buy, although it was not until this year that the dollar had ever fallen below thirty-three cents.⁷ It was the profiteer then as in any war who was fattening on the gains of a great demand with Inflation as his handmaiden. Men like Toombs, who were urging taxation and objecting to the Government paying only two dollars a bushel for corn when the market price was three dollars, were fearful of the results to the Confederacy. Toombs declared that it was impossible to conduct a great war without taxing the people, and that paper money was not a sound basis of credit.⁸ But Toombs was not the Georgian whom Davis heeded. For nearly a year past Benjamin H. Hill had been the spokesman for the President in the Confederate Senate. He was one of the younger men at this time, in his early thirties, and was to end his political life in the United States Senate. He had gained his Chief's confidence and he became the defender of the Administration and smoothed the sharp attacks made by his fellow Georgian, Toombs, and others upon Davis. In December, 1862, he had summoned all the vigor of his oratory to defend some of the "sore spots" of the Administration and especially Davis himself. The charge of favoritism in military appointments was put aside because he could say that " 'not one civil commission' had to his knowledge been awarded by Davis to 'an old political friend of mine,' " ⁹ and he held to the belief that Davis' great desire was above all others "the final and complete success in the revolution." He had not been Hill's choice for President, but Hill declared that in the present crisis he should feel it a duty to select Jefferson Davis as the Chief Magistrate. It was good politics, as well as an expression of opinion, with Georgia's

Governor Brown balking the Administration efforts at every turn.

One complaint had been that the people's demand for an invasion of the North was not heeded. The people did not know at the time that this would be the main issue in the Cabinet councils in these early months of 1863. It was the Army that was to bring the victory and secure the permanent independence.

May Day the year before had seen Butler become Military Governor of New Orleans. Lee's plans for May Day this year were to put an end to the War and make impossible a like fate to Richmond. And the Union General at Chancellorsville, Hooker, then in command of the Army of the Potomac, whom Lee's Army was to meet on May Day, was of but little better stuff than that other May Day General, Butler. It took an Adams to write that about neither could a good word be said.¹⁰

The May Day of 1863 saw the beginning of the battle that caused the death of the Southern General whose greatness every one acknowledged and admired. Even the Union soldiers had cheered him when one day he rode up to a picket, with the Rappahannock like No Man's Land a narrow strip between the two Armies, and his own men were cheering him. When the Union men asked the Confederate sentry what it meant, he told them "General Stonewall Jackson." Then the bluecoats cheered General Stonewall Jackson.¹¹

In the springtime when Jackson might have been sent to the Southwest to hold Vicksburg, political influence or perhaps personal jealousy made Davis overlook him as the only man unless it were Lee himself who might have forced Grant from the Mississippi Valley, or directed, in General Johnston's place, the Army of the Tennessee. Instead he was left

for brilliant work with Lee in the three days' fight at Chancellorsville with bog and bush and broken trees of the wilderness and springtime growth, when his dying words were for the care of his men—his men, who through a pitiful tragedy—in the dusk Jackson and his escort were thought to be Federal horsemen—gave him the wounds.

“The phantoms of a battle came to dwell,
I' the fitful vision of his dying eyes—
Yet even in battle-dreams, he sends supplies
To those he loved so well.

His army stands in battle line arrayed:
His couriers fly: all's done: now God decide!
And not till then saw he the other side
Or would accept the shade.”

Davis sent a flag to wrap about the body of this beloved General when it was brought to Richmond. And for three days the body lay in state in the Capitol. Mrs. Davis remembered that on the first day Davis found himself “staggering from a fearful blow” and unable to take up some detail of business. He could not think.¹²

The battle is called Lee's victory, a brilliant victory, with an army which Lee was writing his President was not his entire command. Numbers had been withdrawn to go to Longstreet, and he thought that as far as he could judge, advantage of numbers and position lay with the other side.¹³ He had some sixty thousand men. The Army of the Potomac that was based at Fredericksburg had 130,000 men. It was Jackson's victory until he accepted the shade, and at the end, when the Army of the Potomac had moved back across the Rappahannock, the gentlemen in Richmond managing the war could think upon the invasion plan of the North.

And perhaps as well that supplies and reënforcements had not gone forward to Lee as he had asked.

The Cabinet were now confronted with the two-fold problem of what should be done for the relief of the Southwest with Grant closing in on Vicksburg, and what for Tennessee, where Bragg was facing Rosecrans. The success of Chancellorsville gave a buoyancy to a hope that was not lasting. There were some plain facts not to be concealed. The voluntary response such as the nation gave to the Hoover food plan in 1917 and 1918 had no historical precedent in the South in 1863. When such a man as Toombs set an example of refusing to give up planting cotton and plant instead food products, the lesser people could not be blamed for refusing too. Cottonless days were not popular. The Impressment Act of March, 1863, became a necessity because what the South really understood about a war was fighting. They had gone to war largely on a question of State Rights, and any authority not deriving from the States was, in the last analysis, unacceptable. The military despotism that was essential to the carrying on of the war, and which Davis so bitterly complained of in the North, was as necessary in his Confederacy, so he learned, but he could not popularize it among his people. The law which practically commandeered supplies for the Army, had it been carried out to the letter, need not have worked for extreme hardship. Only surplus was to be taken, leaving ample supply for the owner, his slaves and his animals. There was to be proper certification and the amount paid, or a statement as to when it would be paid.¹⁴ But the system did not operate as designed, in part because the people's State representatives did not let it. Governor Watts of Alabama put the matter harshly: "If we fail to achieve our independence in the contest, the failure

will arise from breaking down the spirits of the people by acts of tyranny of our officers.”¹⁵ But the law in successful operation would not have sent a starving army into Pennsylvania, nor crowded General Lee’s dispatches with requests for supplies. The failure to pay as the supplies were taken up and the falling values of the Confederate Government credit, which ended in practically no funds at all, furnishes reason enough for the collapse of a plan essentially constructive.

The States suffered in different ways under the Act, and the Governors, largely through the jealousy of the war direction of Davis, made the work of the agents authorized to collect the supplies almost impossible. Their defeatism relieves Davis of much of the opprobrium his own people covered him with in the tragic four years.

When it came to the impressment of slaves, the fat was in the fire. The old battle that waged through the fateful decade of 1850 to 1860 in the Congress of the United States, that, like any other property, slaves might be taken into any State or territory had a strange repercussion under the Impressment Act as modified in 1864. Twenty thousand slaves were to be impressed for a year to work at any place *within* the Confederacy, the impressment for the Confederate Government to be in accord with the State law; so many of the States scaled the number of slaves to be impressed for the States’ use so as to leave none for that of the Confederate Government. When an inland railroad from Danville, Virginia, to Greensboro, North Carolina, was planned by the Government as a safer means of transportation than the seaboard way, Governor Vance refused the Secretary of War’s requisition of slaves to build it.¹⁶ Other States whose Governors were more intent upon preserving States’ Rights

than the Confederacy followed in the same way. The nation that Mr. Gladstone thought Mr. Davis had made was not a "team." During the summer months Virginia joined the protest. By September the need was so great that five thousand more slaves were demanded by the Government, and an order was issued that any slaves found on the streets should be picked up.¹⁷ A Confederate Congressional investigation was demanded of their President that he show his authority for such borrowed power that ignored the State law. The Government went back on to old ground when it declared that the Impressment Act gave full authority for such procedure since by it any property necessary for the Government might be seized, and indisputably slaves were property.¹⁸ The situation was indeed one of "inexorable necessity."

And while the phases of these strange demands were being thwarted by politics, by greed of speculators, by jealousies, the superb sacrifices of the women of the South went on unbroken even by their grief. Their "inexorable necessity" needed no legislation. "It has, perhaps, not happened twice in history that so great a number of civilized women," said Emily James Putnam, "were reduced from comfort to misery in the same length of time as in the Confederate States during the last two years of the Civil War. . . . And the misery produced a type of heroism compounded of high spirit, endurance and efficiency that the world has agreed to honour as one of the most stimulating and admirable achievements of the race."¹⁹

The remaining days of May, Lee left his army at rest. And the Cabinet and President Davis did too. Davis had been ill, too ill to leave his house. Oftentimes Cabinet meetings or military conferences were held there, but the meeting

with the Secretary of War, the President and General Lee on May 15, which was to have Gettysburg as its result, seems to have been at the Executive Office.²⁰ When General Lee came he urged his plan for the invasion of the North. His army would forage in the country, and the spring yield in the fields of Virginia would be for the people, who, for long now, knew the pinch of food. The President had set the example of simple living. One evening a few weeks before, when Mr. Clement Clay dined with him at six o'clock, the menu was beef soup, beef stew, meat pie, potatoes, coffee and bread. Mr. Clay had told the President he wished that the Army in the field had more to eat and those out of it less.²¹ But those out of it could scarcely have had less.

This meeting turned on whether aid should be sent to Pemberton and Johnston in Mississippi, or whether the time was now come for the advance into the North. Lee had brought his army to a fine perfection. At that it was none too large. Divided, it would be all too few for the purpose he had. The Confederate man power was, as Lee had been writing Davis, constantly diminishing and that of the North, he thought, augmenting. There was need to take any and every advantage. The Northern newspapers which he read with such care were giving him much information in regard to the Federal troops, as Russell's dispatches to the *Times* in the Crimean War furnished the enemy with the knowledge of the condition of the British Army before Sebastopol. And Lee hoped and counted on the war weariness in the North, which had shown itself in the successful Democratic elections, to help bring the war to an end. He made his plea to his Commander-in-Chief at this meeting on May 15, and it was granted. If Davis thought of Brierfield, his roses, the sloughs and bayous, and the wild heron rising

from them along the great river, the decision must have come with a pang. A Southern historian thinks it the moment of Davis' great patriotism,²² when he abandoned the plan to detach sufficient troops from the Army of Northern Virginia to relieve Vicksburg and let General Lee take his army, such men, Lee said, as were never in an army before—"They will go anywhere and do anything if properly led"²³—up the valleys towards Gettysburg.

For ten days messages reached the Confederate President of the stress of Pemberton and Johnston. Reënforcements were sent from Beauregard in Charleston and some from Alabama, but Lee knew if his army were divided neither Virginia nor Mississippi could be saved, and he won Davis over to consenting to try to save Virginia.

A Cabinet meeting was held on the 26th of May, for Davis was thinking still of his State. He knew its plight, and he personally wrote to Governor Pettus of Mississippi, requesting him "to use all practical means to get out every man and boy, capable of aiding their country in its need, to turn out, mounted or on foot, with whatever weapons they had, to aid the soldiers in driving the invader from our soil."²⁴

But the Cabinet supported Lee's view. And he took his Army northward in early June. A regiment of Pennsylvania militia burned the long bridge at Harrisburg, and turned the Confederate Army back, but they were three miles nearer that Capital than was the German army to Paris in 1914.

It was in the last days of June that Lee had his whole army of seventy-five thousand in Pennsylvania. The war was to be ended here.

The end of the first day of July saw a Confederate victory at Gettysburg. The plan as Lee had made it was perhaps to

be realized. The second day it had seemed it would be, but Longstreet's Corps were late in coming, and at the end of the day Little Round Top had not been taken, nor had the other. At a spring near the foot of Little Round Top, after the day's fighting, the men of both Armies met and fraternized. It was the morning of the third day that General Lee had said: "The enemy is there, and I am going to strike him." And by the evening of the third day had been the unfaltering charge of Pickett's men, that broke only "when muskets clubbed," and the laying down of Confederate arms near the sunset hour.

With the passing of the fourth day when Lee had waited for the counter attack of Meade that did not come, he began moving his troops slowly back along the road away from Seminary Ridge; the long trail of the wagons, the stumbling men worn with the three days of fighting still staggering on through the night in rain and darkness. He was bringing his Army back slowly across the Potomac, and he said, "It is all my fault."²⁵ Through that long night, perhaps he thought of the meeting with Davis less than two months before. Perhaps he thought that winning the President over to support his advice to invade the North had lost the Western front the reënforcements that might have kept the Mississippi closed. What he did not know, doubtless, was that on the morning of this July 4, General Pemberton had given up Vicksburg.

By the end of the month General Lee was writing a dispatch to Davis:

"No blame can be attached to the Army for its failure to accomplish what was projected by me. . . . I am alone to blame, in perhaps expecting too much of its prowess and

valour. . . . I still think if all things could have worked together it [a victory] would have been accomplished."

He grieved that there was criticism of his troops and of the President, "who of all others are most free of blame."²⁶ And the dispatch concluded with prayers not alone for Davis' health and happiness, but for "the recognition by your gratified country of your great services."

"It is all my fault," stayed in his mind, and in early August Lee sent his resignation to Davis. "The general remedy," he wrote, "for the want of success in a military commander is his removal." And his President replied: "To ask me to substitute you by someone else in my judgment more fit to command or who would possess more of the confidence of the Army, is to demand an impossibility."²⁷

One more milestone was passed on the road to Appomattox.

It was at the close of that long Fourth of July, when Lee and his Army were slowly gathering themselves together after the three days' struggle and beginning the long retreat toward Fairfield. Then came the rain, the torrential kind that broke up the heat and made a curtain with the night, and brought the Potomac to such a stage as caused Lee to write Davis that "the unexpected state of the Potomac was our only embarrassment."

The main purpose, Davis said, of the crossing of the Potomac by Lee and his men was to clear Virginia of Federal troops—they would follow the Army of Northern Virginia as they moved North. Nor had it been part of the Confederate plan to fight a general battle so far from the Confederate base,²⁸ he said. The topography did not make withdrawal an easy matter. His estimate of Gettysburg was that it might be regarded as "the eventful struggle of the

War." But the battle had been waged on the wheatfields of Pennsylvania, thus fulfilling a declaration of Davis in the United States Senate, that the rights of the South should be carried there. The North was heartened, and his own critics had the chance to say that the Southwest had been sacrificed to Virginia. The disappointment to Lincoln that General Lee's army had withdrawn was because he too had hoped that the battle would have ended the war.

It was the old story retold. General Meade did not further a plan for pursuing Lee's Army, and the war was not at an end.

It was hot summer weather along the great river. It was the weather that always brought chills and fever in the Southwest. It was itself an enemy. The Armies were on semi-tropical service, and there was not enough knowledge in those days to handle forty thousand or more men in such a climate and keep them well. And the lush growth in the swamps, the canebrakes, made all movement difficult.

At New Orleans, the river way was in Federal hands. Above Vicksburg traffic had gone on undisturbed for a year past, but the long reaches below Vicksburg to Port Hudson lay in the keeping of General Johnston and General Pemberton. The spring floods had brought a break in the levees, for the river had been at flood stage. This too had carried sickness to the troops and suffering to the people. But Vicksburg and Port Hudson must be held. That was Davis' view,²⁹ and one, he is at some pains to point out, that neither General Johnston nor General Pemberton shared. They were the gateways of communication for the Confederacy in Louisiana and Texas, and so sources of supply. In the Mexican War Davis had known Matamoras well. He knew

now that it was an important Mexican port for arms coming from Europe.³⁰ And he knew even better that the ports on the seaboard were under the watchful eye of the long patrol.

Vicksburg must be kept.

It was the point to control the trans-Mississippi, that part of the land that Davis even after the fall of Richmond believed he might reach, and, once there, in some magnetic fashion, might gather together an Army that would do much. But that was before he had heard of Appomattox.

The long siege went on. The food that was near by, by some miscarriage, did not get to the Army. The department commander, General Johnston, failed to have it reach General Pemberton. But before this, General Grant had brought his Army to the bluffs above Vicksburg and looked down upon the river and the Federal gunboats riding at anchor there.

The surrender of General Pemberton on the Fourth of July, because he was starved out, with food enough and more for his force close at hand, brought the Confederacy to a crisis. The forty-seven days were ended, and no relief had been sent. The "Confederate Gibraltar" had fallen, the Confederacy itself had been cut in two, and the great river, like the Thames, was once again "liquid history." And the homely Lincoln made one of his unerring simple pictures—"The Father of Waters again goes unvexed to the sea."

It was a bitter blow to Davis. He at once came under the sharpest attacks he had yet received from his people. Pemberton had been his choice, and it was Pemberton who had surrendered. But Pemberton was fastened upon as the reason of failure by those of the South who were strongly anti-administration. The real cause was the bitter disap-

pointment in the reverses of the summer. The Northern invasion had failed. The great river was no longer even in part in the hands of the South. It could go on its turgid way out to the Gulf and beyond, rising and falling with the recurring seasons, but the part it was to play in a great Empire was gone like the cries of the wild geese in flight over its swamps and bayous. Some of the "well informed" felt it useless to continue the War. General Joseph E. Johnston was one of the number. But neither Davis nor Lee thought so, and they came under criticism because of their view,³¹ so the Confederate General Wayne said.

Throughout this summer of 1863 Davis was a sick man. There had been the great strain in making the decision not to reënforce Johnston and Pemberton in his own State of Mississippi and to accept the view of Lee that an invasion of the North must come. The July day that brought the failure to the Confederate forces brought pain and anxiety and, admittedly or not, a sense of defeat to the man who never admitted an intellectual defeat. It was an intellectual defeat that had now come to Jefferson Davis. He had not devised a means to win his Congress, his military men or his people. He saw the fabric of his idea of a Confederacy begin to give way, and he had no intellectual recourse to avert it. The blame of the failure was fastened upon him. It grew in volume in the next two years. Vicksburg had fallen. Within a week a steamboat went from St. Louis to New Orleans as undisturbed as if war had never been. The Southwest and Lower South could only feel that in some way the Government at Richmond had failed them.

They call it a valley, those long stretches among the hills in Eastern Tennessee where is found the Cumberland

Escarpment with its curving edges running down from plateau to valley floor. It was not easy country to move an army about, but there was the Tennessee River finding its way between the Blue Ridge and the Cumberland Escarpment and Chattanooga was still in the hands of the Confederates. In September they learned at Richmond that Rosecrans was coming nearer to Bragg, and that off to the East Burnside had taken Knoxville. But if Chattanooga was held, there was still communication with the Southwest. Later in the month there was word of Bragg, reënforced with troops from Virginia under Longstreet giving battle at Chickamauga Creek, which took its way in the valley between Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge. But it was a Virginian's battle, that of George H. Thomas, who had the glory that afternoon, and because of it they called him the "Rock of Chickamauga," though its end was a great defeat. But Rosecrans had withdrawn to Chattanooga, concentrating his whole Army there, and was soon to be relieved of his command. And Bragg had not taken the victory that was so nearly his. The Federal authorities remembered General Grant, and it was he who was to encounter Davis' favorite, General Bragg. But General Grant's first act was to remember General Thomas. This Virginian was given the command of the Army of the Cumberland.

The end of November saw Thomas' men make the charge on Missionary Ridge that ended in Bragg's removal from his command. Even Davis' loyal support of his favorite General gave way for the good of the service at that point. Bragg had failed before when he had Rosecrans under siege in Chattanooga, and he had failed in another way and even more because he had failed his own men. Davis made an attempt to save him when he left Richmond in October and

went to Bragg's camp on Missionary Ridge.³² But it only brought further criticism of the Confederate President, for he still kept him in command, although it was known how lightly Bragg's officers or men believed in him. In a month's time the battle on Missionary Ridge settled the matter; Bragg had to go, but he came to Richmond as the military adviser of the President. A new confidante had come into the official circle. Mrs. Davis said that Davis knew him to be "an able general," and he wanted him as his Chief of Staff. It was more that he would allow no public clamor to decide for him an officer's position.

It was not until the middle of December that Davis finally decided to give General Johnston the command of the Army of the West. The moving finger was writing on towards the Atlanta campaign, and the final break between the Confederate President and one of the most able of his officers. But at the moment the most vital thing was that his own people had lost faith in their Chief Executive. When he had left the Capital to go to Chattanooga he had relied on his own power to unify the interest of his officers. He met with little success. He took a review of Bragg's Army at Chickamauga. He went to Selma in Alabama where the munitions works were, to encourage the men there. This trip of the Confederate President included Charleston as well. He made indeed a circle of the Lower South to hearten his people for new sacrifice if need be. He had no message of hope for them really, although all he said was full of it. "The spring" would see the enemy no longer among them, he thought. The old magnetism was gone. The politicians were more and more getting into the saddle, and the politicians were telling the people that their President was the cause of the Confederate failures.

At Richmond they were waiting news from the Western front, and at the commissaries were paying sixty dollars for a barrel of flour, one bushel of potatoes, one peck of rice, five pounds of salt beef, and one peck of salt.³³ The papers were now issuing evening instead of morning editions for the cost of candles—the light the compositors had to use—was three and a half dollars a pound.³⁴

The autumn months had found Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia back on the Rapidan. The Federal troops were on the Rappahannock. Both armies had dug in for winter, and it was Christmastide of 1863.

In springtime it would be the same thing all over again. But with this difference, that Grant, now made General-in-Chief of the Union Army, with the revived rank of Lieutenant-General, had taken command of the Army of the Potomac, and was to match his strategy with that of Lee. There were the May days in the Wilderness and then at Spottsylvania, where the military specialists learn that modern trench warfare was tried for the first time.³⁵ And “mere attrition” was a phrase used, and Lee was thinking of the valleys of the South that their yield might feed his armies. It was in that rough, scrub-grown country of the Wilderness that Grant must have thought of his days in Mexico. Those days along the high road to Saltillo, when that strange cry came “which began with a growl and rose to a falsetto scream.” Now they called it, Grant’s men, “the Rebel yell” as they heard it in these three days’ terrific fighting in the Wilderness.

And at Richmond, through these May days, the gentlemen managing the war at least were hearing much that would have heartened them were there reserves, were the transport service operating, were there funds, for Grant was los-

ing his men fast, and after Cold Harbor, the loss staggered even the North. But there was little hope of increase in any of these sources.

It was in June that again Lee saved Richmond, and that Grant, twenty-five miles away, was thinking further on this phrase "mere attrition," and the long siege before Petersburg had commenced.

Davis had now begun his daily visits to Lee. He had at this time, it seems, a great hope. His Army on the Western front he had given to the command of the man he never wholly trusted; the "bald, quiet Joe Johnston, little Scotch Dominie of a General" whom his soldiers adored. Davis was planning to take command personally of that Army. He would coöperate with Lee in one great battle that would end the war.³⁸ This tired, war-worn man in these lonely rides out to Lee's headquarters would become again the soldier. He would cease to think of the thousand minutest details that wearied him past the point of endurance with their gripping routine; details that now, however carefully worked out, were showing no results. He would cease to be the political soldier. He would be the soldier in arms. There must come that moment which would spell success for the Confederacy. The way of attainment was not so clear to his soldierly mind.

It was a grief-stricken man who took these lonely rides—a man numbed by the death of his child, Joe, killed by a fall from the balcony of the Executive Mansion but a month before. Couriers came and went that day unheeded. A father had lost his son. There were those who remembered the ceaseless walking back and forth in his room throughout the whole of that night; the long pacing that sounded so strangely in the rooms below. And they remembered too this "gray-haired old man," for so he seemed, standing



THE WHITE HOUSE OF THE CONFEDERACY AT RICHMOND

bareheaded by the open grave of this son, a soldierly figure, straight as an arrow against the sky.³⁷ Empire, Anglo-Saxon domination, the independence of the South, the Armies now facing each other in gun sound of this child's grave—all were forgotten. Jefferson Davis had lost a son.

There was off to the Southwest Sherman, in command to face Johnston. He too had a full command which he had been given since Chattanooga, and all his force was called the Army of the Tennessee, with the Army of the Cumberland and the Army of the Ohio. It was the command that during the summer and autumn he took across the State of Georgia. And it was in the choice of commander of the Confederate forces to thwart that advance that Jefferson Davis made his cardinal mistake, the mistake that cost him the last ounce of good will of his people. He was an old man before many felt about him that he had been a President worthy of the Confederacy. It was not until he went again among his people years after the War that the old feeling in regard to him came back. He had removed Johnston from command before Atlanta. That comprehended the whole of his failure. And what the South remembered was that Sherman's Army seared the State of Georgia and reached the sea. By then it was Christmas time in Savannah. If Johnston had not been removed . . . ? So the South reasoned.

The long-time difference between Governor Brown and Mr. Davis played its part now. Had Brown been willing to send reënforcements to Johnston, without insisting upon appointing their regimental officers,³⁸ had he, in short, been more mindful of the success of the Confederacy than of the letter of States Rights, the masterly retreats before Sherman employed by Johnston might have been more fruitful.

The depriving of a State of what constituted any part of

its defense was a misdemeanor in Governor Brown's eyes. Earlier in the year he was writing to General Joseph E. Johnston, then commanding the troops in the northern part of Georgia, for the return of rolling stock of the State railroad as a legitimate demand of the State. He asks the General to urge upon President Davis the return of two good engines and forty cars which he says is a fourth of the number of which the road has been deprived by the Confederate Government. His final appeal is "Justice to the State of Georgia, to you and your gallant army, requires that Mr. Davis shall neither disregard nor neglect this requirement."³⁹ He demanded that sufficient troops be left to safeguard the State and declared that the President had no power to call for the State troops. "I deny," he wrote the Secretary of War, James A. Seddon, "that the President is, or ever can be, without the consent of the State, the Constitutional Commander-in-Chief of the whole militia of the State. When we take the whole context together, the Constitution is plain upon this point."⁴⁰

What the Cabinet at Richmond was realizing was that Atlanta must be held. Gettysburg, Vicksburg, Chattanooga—the list was long. It was a critical moment in Georgia. The President's old friend, Benjamin Hill, at the request of the Governor, went to Richmond. He went to counsel with the Richmond authorities, and was admitted to a secret session of the Cabinet, where the removal of General Johnston was under discussion. Davis, it appears, opposed it. "Gentlemen," he said, "it is very easy to remove the General, but when he is removed his place must be filled, and where will you find a man to fill it?" And while the talk was going on, Sherman's Army was coming nearer and nearer to Atlanta. After the decision was reached, later that day,

Davis, doubtless worn with the discussion and responsibilities of the matter, drove out to Mr. James Lyons' plantation for tea.⁴¹ Mr. Hill had dined there previously and had told of the removal. "I could not help it," the President said when Mr. Lyons asked why it had been done. He put the blame upon Hill, who, he said, had urged it on behalf of the people of Georgia. And he told, too, how "violent" both his favorites, Benjamin and Seddon, were about it and would listen to nothing else.⁴²

Soon the Richmond authorities received the news that Hood, the successor of Johnston and the gallant of the ladies of Richmond, was unequal to holding Sherman and had been defeated in two battles.

In October, the President determined to try the old magnetism with the people of Georgia. He had been denounced throughout the South for the Hood failure. At Macon he came to tell them that Sherman could not succeed, that the cause was not lost, that Sherman must sooner or later retreat. And then he returned to his earlier manner. "When that day comes, the fate that befell the army of the French Empire in its retreat from Moscow will be reenacted." But it proved to be a speech most helpful to the North—this speech that told how important Atlanta was, and that it must be held to the last extremity. He took a review with his Generals. He was making the strongest appeal to the people he knew. "Let not men ask what the law requires, but give whatever freedom demands."⁴³ But in the course of the speech he had given the Union General information as to Hood's plan.

He was back in Richmond but a short time when the report of Hood's failure in Tennessee reached him, and the stories of "Sherman's neckties," the twisted rails torn up

from the railroad and bound around the trees, were making the picture of the devastation. Mobile had fallen with Farragut's ships taking the toll. What the Confederacy liked to remember was Early's raid in the Shenandoah Valley, in which he brought his men into the District of Columbia. But that was far back in July. What they knew now was that Christmas time in 1864 was not one of holly and mistletoe in the Southland. There had been Thomas' destruction of Hood's army at Nashville in early December, and once more the critics of Davis could say that had he not removed Johnston before Atlanta, this second débâcle need not have come in Tennessee. And by Christmas Day itself Sherman had reached the sea. But the end of the hopes of the South had really come when McClellan was defeated at the polls in November.

By March of 1864 Jefferson Davis was saying, "We have no friends abroad." Within a few months he was realizing how perilously near the truth it was at home. The fall of Atlanta brought that about. It was all very well for Slidell to assure the Emperor at the races in the Bois de Boulogne that the loss of Atlanta was immaterial; it was quite another thing for the Confederate General Hood, whose business it was to prevent the city falling into Sherman's hands, to say so. The President had to bear the blame. He had substituted Hood for Johnston, and it was a military judgment that cost him the support of his people. It was then that the rumors of the need of a dictator blew again through the land—a dictator who should capitalize that superb war spirit of the South that for four years had burned like a white flame. There could have been but one military dictator and that was General Lee. But the man who could send his resignation to the President of the Con-

federacy after Gettysburg, because he measured the failure of his Army by his own command of it, was not the man to overthrow a government in order to become its head. Rather he went about planning means to strengthen the man power of his Army now fast becoming the thin gray line. The only reserves were the blacks; from time to time there were signs that they must be enlisted to increase the Army, but the idea all but bordered on revolution.

In the early part of 1864, when the idea was first discussed with Johnston and some of his officers, a number approved although Johnston did not commit himself. A protest was made to Richmond by some of the officers, so the authorities declared against it, and then Johnston did.⁴⁴ The only hope the South had of increasing its man power was put over for a year until it was too late. It was another instance where audacity might have done much. But Davis was never audacious.

Lee, the soldier, needed troops. The blacks alone could be called out, and he urged Congressional action to that end. Slavery, as Justice Lamar said later, could not survive a war, and Lee knew it must be given up. He had by January, 1865, asked his own State, Virginia, to draft the negroes.⁴⁵ It was that "new republic" that Lord Lyons had written Lord John Russell about that the South was fighting for now—an independent nation.

In his address to his Congress in November, 1864, urged on by his Secretary of State, Davis gave hint that the negroes might be used as soldiers. Mr. Benjamin, in the intervals of his preoccupation with foreign affairs, had approved this plan; he had, indeed, thought it might help to secure foreign recognition if the Confederate States would abolish slavery, but that failure was complete.

The whole question was most confusing. It drew out bitter denunciation from those who felt that the Confederate Government was not only infringing upon States Rights, but upon domestic matters. It would be rather extraordinary for that Government to emancipate the slaves.

The bill which finally passed, in March, 1865, authorizing the raising of three hundred thousand negro troops, said nothing about emancipation. That delicate matter was left to the States. But it came too late to aid General Lee and the South was saved from any embarrassment as to its position, for no negro troops were ever in the Confederate ranks at the front.⁴⁶ The Federal lines around Petersburg were tightening.

The winter had been a desperate one for the sick man who went on with his impossible task. The President had lost his hold upon his Congress. If any measure brought forward was thought to be one he favored, that was enough to defeat it. It reached a point where his Secretary of the Treasury, Trenholm, felt obliged to resign since the Senate Finance Committee had told him frankly that they would not under any circumstances adopt any suggestions he might make. Obviously they would be measures sponsored by the Davis Administration and the Congress would not permit the implication that they would sanction any such. But the Secretary yielded to his President's urging to stand by him in his hour of need, and so was with him when the Confederate Government left Richmond.

Davis had been scourged by his own people for the fall of Atlanta and then of Savannah, and this was followed by a Congressional determination to take military direction away from the Executive. It was the method they took to deprive

him of any real power. The Confederate Congress had passed an Act empowering the President to appoint "an officer, who shall be known and designated as General-in-Chief, who shall be ranking officer of the Army, and as such shall have command of the military forces of the Confederate States." ⁴⁷ But his appointment of Lee as Commander-in-Chief cut away this Congressional plan, and Lee's restoring Johnston as head of the Army of the West which Davis permitted, made a way out for his sensitive pride and satisfied the demands of the people. But it was too late as so much else had been too late.

A few days later Davis was writing Lee, ". . . I have not failed to appreciate the burden already imposed on you as too heavy to enable an ordinary man to bear an additional weight. Your patriotic devotion I knew would prompt you to accept anything which was possible, if it promised to be beneficial to the country. The honor designed to be bestowed has been so fully won that the fact of conferring it can add nothing to your fame. . . ."

The failure of the Hampton Roads Conference in January marked the close of the Vice-President's, Mr. Stephens', official efforts. They had begun when he became the Constitution builder for the Provisional Congress, and among his own people there are still some who think him as inept in one as in the other. But it was Jefferson Davis who would consider peace negotiations only on the basis of recognition of the South as a separate country, and so instructed his Commissioners, thereby preventing any compromise of agreement being reached. President Lincoln's plan that the Confederate States should return to the Union on the basis of the Union paying for the emancipated slaves could not be considered, for Stephens and the others had their written in-

structions from Davis which admitted of only one ground for negotiation—the independence of the South. The prominent citizen, F. P. Blair of Maryland, who was the means of bringing about the Conference, had in his possession two letters, one from Jefferson Davis in which he expressed his willingness to enter into conference with a view to secure peace to “the two countries,” and one from Abraham Lincoln who expressed a similar willingness “with the view of securing peace to the people of our common country.” The impasse was there before a meeting could take place.

Once more, in the early part of February, Davis tried the familiar plan to hearten his people and made the speech in the African Church—because it was the largest auditorium in Richmond—that is yet talked about as the great speech of his life. The old magnetism was there and he caught and held the people as he always had done when they listened to him. He said, among other things, that from the commencement of the War he had believed peace through victory was the only one. And he plead with those men absent without leave to return to their posts. If only half of the number would return the enemy could be overcome. It was reckoned there were more than one hundred thousand “stragglers.” And even the Richmond *Examiner*,⁴⁸ always bitterly against Davis, found space to carry his stirring appeal:

“Let us then unite our hands and our hearts, lock our shields together, and we may well believe that before another summer solstice falls upon us, it will be the enemy who will be asking us for conferences and occasions in which to make known our demands.”

The wild cheering that broke out as he spoke must have solaced this man who had been so rebuked by his people, this man to whom any rebuke in his sensitivity was unendurable.

There was ammunition enough and more until the end of the war. The factories had been built in the South and powder and shot and shell were ample. There was food for the Army and more way to the South and the Southwest. But the military problem of transportation was unsolved. It was one of the major causes of the South's collapse. The time was now at hand when Lee's army was starving and he was telling his President it was a question how long their physical strength would hold out.

The prices in Richmond were fantastic. Bacon was selling at six dollars a pound, sugar at ten dollars or twelve dollars a pound. And the purchasing currency was printing press currency at that. Mrs. Davis had sold her carriage and horses, but they were bought ⁴⁹ by some gentlemen of Richmond and returned to her. Then the problem became one of how they were to be fed. But the problem was not for long.

There were Cabinet changes. Breckenridge had replaced Seddon as Secretary of War. Trenholm was dealing with the Department of Finance, now but a name, yet it was still a privilege to dine at his house and have his Madeira and hear Mr. Benjamin talk, the "gifted conversationalist." There were the other entertainments at Mr. Trenholm's, usually Saturday evenings. There was dancing and music, still the will to cling to the old ways of living. Distinguished foreigners would come in most correct dress. They were easily picked out from the men in from the front in their ragged uniforms. The four-year-old dresses of the ladies were a sort of uniform too. They had given and were still giving their all. But yet there was dancing Saturday nights at the Trenholms'. Then one day it all stopped. General

Lee had sent a dispatch to President Davis: "The movement of General Grant to Dinwiddie C. H. seriously threatens our position, and diminishes our ability to maintain our present lines in front of Richmond and Petersburg."⁵⁰ The date was April 1, 1865.

It was the doctrinaire who sat in the room marked "The President" at Montgomery, and later at Richmond, and evolved a curious foreign policy. So far as England was concerned, Davis knew that economic necessity would quickly bring about recognition of the Southern Confederacy, or so he reasoned. This in turn would mean an uninterrupted cotton market for the South. The usual outflow for the great Southern staple would be undisturbed. It all seemed so simple. The result would be at once a foreign and financial policy and the Secretary of State, Mr. Toombs, who soon, however, preferred to be in uniform, and the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Memminger, who certainly had Mr. Davis' support in spite of protests, found their departments chartered.

The swift sending of the Yancey Commission within a month after he had taken office would ensure this plan of Mr. Davis. The mission was a failure, for, said the phrase-making Yancey, there were no instructions except to dwell on the justice of the cause and cotton. The weeks moved on and the cotton-lever policy of the Confederate President to secure recognition was to work for ruin. The men whose business knowledge could have furnished the doctrinaire President with the practical details and needs for utilizing the certain source of wealth of the South, were not heeded. The planters knew very well what was needed; soon the press was to appeal to the Administration to let the great

staple work for the Confederacy, but Mr. Davis was indisposed to match minds.

Before many weeks the South learned that Her Majesty's Government acknowledged their belligerent rights, but the dream of an independent nation was to be only in their own minds and in that of Mr. Gladstone's when, a year later, he made the Newcastle speech. "There is no doubt that Jefferson Davis and other leaders of the South have made an army; they are making, it appears, a navy; and they have made what is more than either—they have made a nation," was the famous utterance. It was in some such terms as that speech, months before it was made, that Jefferson Davis saw the future of the Confederacy, but delayed action that might have gone to making it a reality.

Occupied with paper work and innumerable details that kept him hours on end at his office, there seems to have been time lost in getting from Europe before the blockade became effective the arms and material that would have sent the Southern Army into the field with reasonable equipment. The able Major Huse, who was the purchasing agent in England, made contracts for future delivery, but apparently found nothing immediately available. At the end of the year he was writing of purchases made, and waiting shipment.

Davis had understood very well the importance of having agents at work to secure arms and ammunition in the North. A few days after his election his letter,¹ dated February 21, 1861, to Raphael Semmes gives very specific directions for such operations: "As agent of the Confederate States," he writes, "you are authorized to proceed, as hereinafter set forth, to make purchases and contracts for machinery and

¹ This letter was published in *Rise and Fall*, Vol. I, p. 311, with the names omitted. It is now accessible with the names in the volumes of the Davis Letters at the Confederate Museum, Richmond.

munitions, or for the manufacture of arms and munitions of war.

"Of the proprietor of the Hazard Powder Company in Connecticut, you will probably be able to obtain cannon and musket powder . . . and also to engage with him for the establishment of a powder mill at some point in the limits of our territory. . . . A short time since, the most improved machinery for the manufacture of rifles, intended for the Harper's Ferry Armory was, it was said, for sale by the manufacturer. If it be so at this time, you will procure it for this Government, and use the needful precaution in relation to its transportation. Mr. Wright, the superintendent of the Harper's Ferry Armory, can give you all the information in that connection which you may require." It was preparedness of a sort.

Captain Semmes had been instructed to find vessels which might be converted to naval use, but was unsuccessful at that time.² He had greater success later, in England, as the *Alabama* was to show.

And Mr. Davis was given information as well. In one instance it took the form of a communication from a United States Senator from Indiana. The letter was quite explicit.

Washington, March 1, 1861.

My dear Sir:

Allow me to introduce to your acquaintance my friend Thos. B. Lincoln of Texas. He visits your Capital mainly to dispose of what he regards a great improvement of fire-arms. I recommend him to your favorable consideration as a gentleman of first respectability and reliable in every respect.

Very truly yours,

JESSE D. BRIGHT³

To His Excellency Jefferson Davis,
President of the Confederate States."

This may have been of service to Mr. Davis, but Andrew Johnson saw to it that Bright was expelled from the Senate.

Since the formation of the Confederate Government at Montgomery, Lord Lyons at Washington had been keeping the Foreign Office informed constantly of the so delicately balanced question of an oncoming war. Lord Lyons was well aware of Mr. Seward's effort to prevent if possible "the disruption of the Union." He was equally aware of Seward's suggestion that this might be accomplished by providing "excitement to the public mind by raising questions with Foreign Powers," and he had so written Lord John Russell. He soon received the reply outlining what British policy would be, and it doubtless did not escape his observing eye that the Draft had been seen by both Lord Palmerston and the Queen. It bore the date February 20, 1861. The policy would be "very forbearing." They would show by their acts how highly they value the relations of peace and amity of the United States. "But they would take care to let the Government which multiplied provocations and sought for quarrels understand that their forbearance sprang from a consciousness of strength, and not from the timidity of weakness. They would warn a Government which was making political capital out of blustering demonstrations that our patience might be tried too far." ⁴ The "blustering demonstrations" suggest the hand of Lord Palmerston, for back in 1855 he had put himself on record in regard to Americans by declaring "I take it they are mere swaggering Bullies. If, however, they should push matters to extremities . . . we have a deeply piercing blow to strike at their Southern States if ever we should be at war with them. Freedom to the Slaves proclaimed by a British Force landed in the South would shake the Union to its base." ⁵ This doubtless would

not have been the startling procedure he would have recommended in 1861. The diplomatic phrasing of Lord John Russell to Lord Lyons served better at the moment. The draft ended with the basic reference to any discussion of Anglo-American relations. "If this tone is taken when necessary, and only when necessary, I have no fears that the American Republic will seek a quarrel with a nation sprung from the same parents, and united by language as well as by ties of kindred, and a long period of friendly intercourse."⁶ And the days wore on to the April crisis.

The Yancey Commission reached London on the same day as did the news of the outbreak of the war, and England set herself to formulate what her policy was to be.

The Commissioners were not received officially, but Lord John Russell had written Lord Lyons that should they request to see him, he would receive them unofficially, and he understood that at Paris M. Thouvenel would follow the same course. He expressed, at the same time, the wish that the new American Minister, Mr. Adams, would arrive soon.⁷ Lord Lyons was thus informed as to what he might have to tell the Government to which he was accredited. Neutrality was so indicated.

When the Commissioners did see Lord John Russell, no pledge of recognition was given them, but the machinery for the declaration of the belligerent rights of the South was turning rapidly, so rapidly indeed that England did not wait the actual arrival of the new Minister, but issued the famous Proclamation on the day Mr. Adams docked at Liverpool, where he had the news.

A few days later Lord John Russell was writing Lord Lyons that Mr. Adams had come to see him at Pembroke Lodge and told him that "he had no wish to see us take part

in the war, but he did wish us not to give assistance to the South. I told him we had no thought of doing so. That the sympathies of this country were rather with the North than with the South, but we wished to live in amicable terms with both parties.”⁸ This did not seem to the North often to be the case, but the South as the years went on believed it to be true.

With Davis’ Proclamation of the intention to issue Letters of Marque and Lincoln’s declaration of the blockade, England had realized some of the difficulties which were before her. Those two Proclamations concerned her vital interest, her carrying trade. The freedom of the seas was to be kept for the ships upon their lawful occasions.

The English Proclamation of Neutrality on May 13, 1861, was the first rebuff to the Confederate hope of recognition as an independent Government. This, said Davis, “was, in point of fact, an actual decision against our rights and in favor of the groundless pretensions of the United States. It was a refusal to treat us as an independent Government.”⁹ And in that last sentence lay the beginning and end of the Southern foreign policy. No compromise was then or later to be accepted in the relations of the South with Great Britain or France, and cotton was to be the lever to attain recognition. The Proclamation did, however, recognize privateering as a right of the South. But the order of the British Government of June 1, which forbade “the bringing of prizes into English ports or those of the colonies or any territorial waters of the United Kingdom,” took the thunder out of the enterprise and was a sharp blow to the privateers that were being fitted out rapidly after Davis’ invitation to those who desired Letters of Marque. By early May the Confederate Government was gratified to learn that

there had been some three hundred applications for these Letters, so ready were gentlemen adventurers of the South to go down to the sea in ships. But in reality there were only a few ships that could be fitted out as privateers.

Against this order of the British Government, the Confederate Government made a vigorous protest. It was necessarily of more advantage to the North with its greater number of ships of commerce at sea.¹⁰ Davis pleased the South in his denunciation of the order in the Congress at Richmond.

The British fleet based on Halifax, in the spring of 1861, received from Admiral Milne instructions as to the strict neutrality to be observed by all officers under his command. It was, in short, of that type which required it should be observed in thought as well as in deed, and read specifically, "to abstain in any intercourse you may have with [officers or] Citizens of the United States or the Confederate States not only from acting but expressing sentiments contrary to Her Majesty's Pleasure, and you will enjoin the same line of conduct upon all under your orders."¹¹ By the end of this year the famous incident of the *Trent* strained this thought-and-deed neutrality almost to the breaking point.

In the meantime the long patrol began its duties along the coast to observe how effective was the blockade announced by President Lincoln. Great Britain as a signatory to the Declaration of Paris was quite aware that a blockade to be effective must be binding. But it remained for Lord John Russell to make a somewhat elastic definition of "effective" in a letter to Lord Lyons at Washington, and its elasticity was a rather severe blow to Confederate hopes. This, however, was after Captain Wilkes and the *San Jacinto* had brought the United States and England to the point

where Lord Palmerston could indulge his passion for war threats, and Mr. Mason and Mr. Slidell were not to have a continuous voyage, technically or otherwise. The Yancey Commission, which Consul Bunch had characterized so minutely for the benefit of the Foreign Office, had failed, and so thoroughly that Davis decided upon sending the special commissioners, Mr. Mason and Mr. Slidell, to replace them.

Davis' choice of these two gentlemen to act as Commissioners from the Confederate Government to England and to France has been regarded as rather more fortunate than his other selections. Mr. Mason, a handsome man and a notable figure when in the United States Senate, dressed in Virginia homespun and having the air, so Charles Francis Adams thought, of owning the Senate Chamber, did not, however, secure the hoped-for results in England. The observing and astute Mrs. Chesnut did not think so, and said so to Russell of the London *Times*, when she met him at the President's house. "The sending Mr. Mason to London is the maddest thing yet, worse in some points of view than Yancey, and that was a catastrophe."¹² Before speaking she made quite sure that Mr. Davis was not within hearing. Mr. Slidell, the Commissioner to France, it was thought, had all the qualities of address and social experience together with his knowledge of the language that would make him highly useful in teasing the vanities of the Emperor. Also his law partnership with Mr. Benjamin, who was daily coming to be more and more the close associate of President Davis, had familiarized him with the subtleties of that Oriental mind, whose directions he would be likely to heed. On the whole Mr. Slidell appeared to be an excellent choice.

The *San Jacinto*, commanded by Captain Wilkes, was in the Bahama Channel the night of November 8, 1861. She

was there because her Captain had picked up the information in Havana Harbor that these gentlemen, Mr. Mason and Mr. Slidell, would be on board the mail packet, *Trent*. The *San Jacinto* was homeward bound after a cruise on the African coast, and her captain had been out of touch with the Navy Department long enough to be willing to take some independent action. In this instance it took the form of making a private capture, since he acted quite without authority from the Department. A shot fired across the bows of the *Trent* brought her to, and Mr. Mason and Mr. Slidell were transferred to the *San Jacinto* under the protests of the Captain of the *Trent*, as well as those of the English naval officer in charge of Her Majesty's mails on the ship. Anglo-American relations suffered a sea change.

Captain Wilkes' action obliged Seward and Lincoln to find a means by which these gentlemen should be released from Fort Warren in Boston Harbor and the British Government be satisfied. While this was going on Londoners watched reënforcements marching through St. James's Park on their way to Canada and the *Great Eastern* became a British troopship outward bound to Quebec. Admiral Milne's fleet was augmented, and the Law officers of the Crown were preparing a legal opinion as to whether or not Captain Wilkes was within his rights.

Lord Palmerston, still carrying his premiership with fine vigor, was none the less a man of seventy, and in the fatigues of his office may have failed to understand the opinion as given to him by these Law officers in the Conference which he had with them on the 11th of November. His familiar letter to Delane of the *Times*, dated the 11th, expresses regret that in the opinion of these officers, Captain Wilkes was within his right, according to the English principles of

international law, in holding up the *Trent* and taking Davis' Commissioners off. But the report which the Law officers submitted to Earl Russell—the long familiar “Lord John” had been superseded by the newer title—on November 12, states exactly the contrary.¹³ So while these officers may have changed their opinion within twenty-four hours, or Lord Palmerston's understanding perhaps been at fault, it is clear it was not changed because of the fury which was aroused when news of the seizure was brought at the end of the month, a charge that was sometimes made. Meanwhile the dying hand of Prince Albert “softened” the message sent to Lord Lyons at Washington, and the South reluctantly realized that there would be no war between the United States and England and recognition was yet further away. The South would have to make fresh effort were the Confederacy to succeed. Davis issued one of his numerous Proclamations that November 15 should be set aside as a Day of Fasting and Prayer.¹⁴

The year 1862 was to bring the attitude of England toward the South to a crisis. Notwithstanding the hardship the blockade pressed upon England, it did not coerce her into recognition of the South as an independent nation. The Cabinet was disposed to move with caution. The North had not overcome the South. On the contrary, the reports from America, through the summer, were showing the superb resistance of the South in spite of the defeats of the first half of the year. The war in its hideous reality was stirring the world. It was perhaps a moment for “good offices.” The large ship owner, Lindsay, Member of Parliament, thought it had arrived and gave notice of offering such a motion. Lord Palmerston on seeing Lindsay's letter, June

19, 1862, to Lord John Russell added his views on the subject:

"This seems an odd moment to choose for acknowledging the separate independence of the South when all the seaboard almost and the principal internal rivers are in the hands of the North, and when one of the two large armies of the South seems to have been split in fragments. The South may and probably will maintain the contest, but we ought to know that this separation is a Truth and a Fact before we declare it to be so. Moreover, they would not be a bit the more independent for our saying so unless we followed up our declaration by taking part with them in the war."

Lord Palmerston in his best manner then states his view of Lindsay. "As to Mr. Lindsay's opinion [*sic*] that he has secured the support of both sides of the House that is no doubt founded in his own belief, but he has shown that his credulity somewhat outstrips his reason."¹⁵

Mr. Lindsay was an unfortunate choice for the South to have made to represent their interests in the House of Commons. That self-appointed interviewer of Napoleon III on recognition indeed made ready to move in Parliament for recognition of the Southern States, but postponed it when Lord Palmerston made it clear that the Government would be opposed to it. The more difficult question of mediation was posed by Lindsay in July in a debate, but Palmerston again had it understood that the Government would be placed in the position of having taken sides; and the motion was withdrawn. Neutrality was again made safe.

It was the period of both Mr. Mason's and Mr. Slidell's greatest activity.

There had been some stir when M. Mercier, the French Ambassador at Washington, made his historic visit to Rich-

mond. He had conceived the idea that the moment was ripe for recognition of the South, and Seward helped him to the point of aiding him to make the trip. It was the distress period of the cotton shortage in both England and France, and M. Mercier's visit was somewhat tempered by a desire to have trade with France resumed. He found the gentlemen at Richmond more intent than ever on staking their all as an independent nation. He told Lord Lyons on his return that he did not consider the time favorable for recognition of the South, although he believed that ultimately it must come. The situation was neatly put by Lord Russell when he said that if England and France were to do anything it must be on "a grand scale. It will not do for England and France to break a blockade for the sake of getting cotton." This view was oddly enough shared by the vitriolic editor of the Richmond *Examiner*, Pollard, when he wrote of the "puerile argument" of President Davis "about the power of King Cotton" which amounted to this—"that the great and illustrious power of England would submit to the ineffable humiliation of acknowledging its dependency on the infant Confederacy of the South, and the subserviency of its Empire, its political interests and its pride, to a single article of trade that grows in America!"¹⁶

There was a period of quiet but soon the excitement was back again on mediation and its rumors, with the failure of McClellan before Richmond, and Mr. Adams was informing Earl Russell of President Lincoln's views on any attempt at mediation. Yet another stir came with the Emperor's famous telegram on July 16 to his Foreign Minister, M. Thouvenel, then in London—"Demandez au gouvernement Anglais s'il ne croit pas le moment venu de reconnaître le Sud." The Emperor had just received Mr. Slidell at Vichy,

and this word from across the Channel roused Southern hopes. With the adjourning of Parliament in August, however, rumors were stilled while the Emperor continued his baths at Vichy and Mr. Gladstone made his epochal journey to Newcastle.

Mr. Gladstone too had for some time fancied mediation in concert with other Powers of Europe might be effective. He was taking the long view of the statesman at the same time he was regarding the immediate effect on the balance sheet of the Empire. Notwithstanding the loss to England through the cutting off of the cotton supply, the commercial treaty with France, which had been Cobden's great contribution, brought up the British exports to that country more than double, and Mr. Gladstone as Chancellor of the Exchequer could not be wholly disheartened although the export trade showed a bad drop of some ten millions sterling by the end of 1861, and by the end of 1862 a further drop of another million which could be laid directly to the cotton shortage.¹⁷

But the blockade had produced great suffering among the factory workers if it had not so acutely affected the trade balance. Mr. Gladstone was moved to contribute to their relief, and it took the form of bringing to Hawarden some of these Lancashire operatives, now out of work with the closing down of the mills, to make the paths in the park. With this human reminder of hardships the war was producing, his mind worked more toward mediation, and then came the eventful journey to Newcastle and the speech now become a commonplace.

Lord Palmerston and Lord Russell were flirting with this idea of mediation as well, and so Lord Palmerston wrote Mr. Gladstone, on the eve of the visit to the Tyne. With such plans occupying the mind of the Chancellor of the Ex-

chequer, he hoped the proposals of the mediation and the suffering in Lancashire would not be linked together! Nothing could have been more exemplary than the behavior of the Lancashire men, but even if in a single instance there were to be an outbreak of protest, it might indeed make England's position seem to America that she was thinking of her own interests rather than the broad one of humanity.¹⁸ Doubtless with the knowledge he had that Lord Palmerston and Lord Russell had exchanged views as to mediation first, with recognition of the Southern States to follow, he permitted himself the famous emotional utterance at Newcastle.

The effect was immediate and far reaching. It appeared that a Minister of the Crown was speaking for the Government. That was the whole point, for the year before, immediately after the formation of the Confederate Government at Montgomery, the *Times* had said "the Seceding States have now constituted themselves a nation,"¹⁹ and it was simply one of many other things the *Times* had to say. But the South had a hope that was not to be fulfilled. And young Henry Adams, who had fancied his education once before would be completed elsewhere than in London, became certain of it now, for his father let the rumor become audible that he might be asking for his passports.

A month later Gladstone was writing the Duchess of Sutherland that he was not aware that he had ever at Newcastle, or anywhere else, expressed a sympathy for the Southern cause or praised President Davis. It required some years to go by, some thirty-four in fact, before he mantled himself in repentance and left a fragment telling how great was his mistake.

Mr. Gladstone, in his sympathy for the South in this same year, had another project in mind which, had he gone so far

as to put it into a speech, would doubtless have led to a lasting repentance. It was to offer Canada to the North if she would let the South go.²⁰ Happily he got no further with it than putting it in a letter. But Lord Palmerston was deprived of a rare bit of spice. Mr. Gladstone had further to free himself, for he seemingly had supported his belief in Mr. Davis' creation of a nation by subscribing two thousand guineas to the Confederate Loan. He afterwards declared the appearance of his name in the list as "so mischievous a forgery."²¹

A few days before the letter to the Duchess of Sutherland he prepared a memorandum for the Cabinet,²² when his views on the American War became more sharply defined in regard to mediation. In brief they were: no interference must be taken by England alone, but there must be a concert of Powers. England, France and Russia, as the three greatest Powers of Europe, would probably be the right one. Russia, he thinks, would supply "in the largest measure the one vital element, otherwise deficient, of traditional and unquestioned friendliness to America." If any recognition ensues it must be accomplished with the understanding of continued neutrality. The stalemate moment of the two Armies, with the failure of invasion, he takes to mean that the North has failed in its aggressive purpose. It was a good moment, too, for the sympathies of the people of England were drawn to the South.

He refers again to the possibility of some outburst on the part of the heretofore exemplarily behaved Lancashiremen. But the crux comes at the point that the war has inflicted "beyond all comparison" the greatest suffering on the other countries of the civilized world, a circumstance which he felt would give these countries the right to speak, should they care to, on the war continuing. He praises the daring and

tenacity of the South, as likely to lead to its independence. He would use moral force as well in this "interference" to mitigate if not to remove slavery. And with the independence of the South coming nearer and nearer, he thinks delay in England's interference will not give her much of a moral title to urge the claims of the slaves upon the Southern Confederacy.

Lord Palmerston's ardor for interference, however, had somewhat cooled after the news of Antietam. He had expected a decisive Southern victory, and now it might be well to wait for further developments before recognition of the South should be made.

The interest of France in the matter was being furthered by Slidell. Soon the part the Emperor was prepared to play appeared in his offer that France, together with England and Russia, should call for an armistice. The Emperor's suggestion was an armistice of six months and a suspension of the blockade which would open the Southern ports to European commerce.

In the end Russia refused; the English Cabinet, led by Lord Palmerston, who permitted his neutrality in this instance to be of deed rather than thought, concluded for a number of worthy reasons that the time was not opportune, and the *Times* became ecstatic over the Cabinet decision and quoted Mr. Cobden about its being cheaper to feed Lancashire "on turtle and venison than to plunge into a desperate war with the Northern States of America, even with all Europe at our back." ²³

The partition of the United States occupied the minds of the Chancelleries of England and France in curious fashion. There were those in England who would have been glad to see a permanent separation of North and South because it

would be less formidable to British interests. There were those in France led on by the ingenious hopes of the Emperor who believed the separation would throw the sympathy of the South to his Mexican venture, and France be served. Both England and France always held in reserve their horror of slavery to aid them in extricating themselves should their neutrality cost too much. It was a period of many diplomatic gestures.

Mr. Gladstone was right when he said the fortunes of the South at this time were at their zenith. The agents of the Confederacy at work in London and Paris were meeting with encouragement.

And at Richmond Davis might well feel that his foreign policy was sound. Mr. Benjamin had been his Secretary of State since March, so rapidly had he moved him from one Cabinet position to another. There was, indeed, a brief time when he was both Secretary of State and Secretary of War. Now Benjamin was more constantly at his side, and the South knew that the flatteries of the Secretary became the ideas of the President. Mr. Benjamin never lost his faith in the nostrum of European recognition for the South. That idea alone would have made him acceptable to Davis. European recognition meant Southern independence, and to secure that was, in brief, the foreign as well as the domestic policy of the Confederacy.

Years after the war Benjamin had not changed his view. Living luxuriously in London, a successful member of the English Bar, with little bitterness towards the Northerners except for having burned his Law library and drunk his cellar of old Madeira, he could still be impatient with Russell of the *Times*, on this matter of recognition. "I consider

your Government made a frightful mistake which you may have occasion to rue hereafter,"²⁴ he told him.

Throughout this year of 1862 excitements came and went. The news of the fall of New Orleans for a moment stayed British opinion. Then the famous Butler "woman" order, at New Orleans, published in the *Times*, gave an occasion for the press to vent itself, and one to Lord Palmerston and Mr. Adams to exchange vivid notes, and official and social visits ceased between Mansfield Street and Cambridge House. Jefferson Davis issued a proclamation in which he declared Benjamin F. Butler to be a felon, and that he no longer be considered or treated as a public enemy of the Confederate States of America, but as "an outlaw and common enemy of mankind. And if captured to be immediately executed by hanging."²⁵

This year in its diversions had included those of allowing the *Alabama* and the *Florida* to leave the Liverpool docks, a procedure that divided the honors with Gladstone's speech in rousing public clatter, and gave Lord Russell an opportunity to repent as well as Mr. Gladstone. The North Atlantic British Squadron were keeping their eyes fixed on the seaports at the South²⁶ hoping to discover illegal procedure on the part of Northern Captains in the blockade. It was another strained moment in Anglo-American relations.

How far the Emancipation Proclamation which came at this time changed British opinion is debatable. What it did do was to unify Middle Class opinion and gain the cheering support of the Labor Class. And then there emerged the belief that, after all, the war had been undertaken against slavery, for the English mind had not found it easy to grasp the idea of the preservation of the Union.

By the early part of 1863 there was a revival of cor-

respondence over the subject of the Laird rams—those would-be Commerce Destroyers of the Confederacy—for the *Alabama* depredations had caused communications to Lord Lyons from Seward that the Senate had at hand a bill whereby Mr. Lincoln would have power to issue Letters of Marque, and a snowstorm of letters had passed between Mr. Seward, Mr. Adams and Lord Russell. The passage of this bill was the lever Mr. Seward used to prevent further ship building for the Confederate States.

Lord Russell, whose five-day inattention to the communications about the *Alabama* gave her the chance to put to sea, set his mind a little more actively on the question of the rams. He wrote his Under Secretary that they should not be allowed to leave the port of Liverpool until they were quite clear of any suspicion. If they were “not for France, Turkey, Egypt or any State in alliance with the Queen, obviously they must be for the Confederates.” The burning of his fingertips made Lord Russell cautious. He declared that if the Law Officers did not consent to detain them he himself would go to London and argue the point with them at the Treasury. Then he inquired why the Lairds had not been asked officially before, adding: “Messrs. Laird by stating that they wished to try this vessel against vessels of war in the Channel Fleet admit that their vessel is intended for purposes of war.”²⁷ This was in September, 1863, and the news from overseas had not brought word of Confederate victories. Lee had withdrawn the long gray line back from Seminary Ridge, and Grant had come down over the bluffs at Vicksburg.

The year had been one of alarms and excursions and press attacks, and neutrality was tossed about like a soccer ball. The tactful Lord Lyons was wearied with his efforts in keep-

ing a balance of peace between his home Government and the one to which he was accredited. And wearied perhaps even further by the considerably more than nine hundred notes he had received from Seward in the course of the year, and the difficulties in connection with the British Consuls which finally resulted in the Confederate Government declining to have them either live in or perform their duties within the limits of the Confederacy.²⁸ The United States Government too had its own views on British Consuls, as Consul Bunch learned.

The "slight, perpetual smile" of Mr. Benjamin doubtless must have at times forsaken him. He also finds occasion to complain of the treatment by England. Mr. Roebuck had made his famous motion in the House that England unite with Napoleon III to interfere for the benefit of the South, but made the mistake of claiming to be an emissary of the Emperor to make the request. The result was brilliant oratory from John Bright, who as well as Lord Palmerston scourged him for "trying to represent the Emperor on the floor of the House of Commons," and the motion did not come to a vote. Thereafter the whole subject of recognition never came to the point of a debate of importance. And at this time, the entire debate had been in a sense one of English politics to overthrow the Ministry if possible, with Disraeli in the offing to bring the Tories into power. Roebuck had written to Slidell, "I am told that Disraeli in the adjourned debate will come out on our side," but the way of politics changed that.²⁹

England was waiting word of Lee's triumphant advance to the North. Washington was thought to be in danger, and M. Mercier had even arranged for a French warship to be at hand to take him away. And readers of the London *Times*

were hearing from a New York correspondent that Lee's success would be hailed by the North and that "he and Jefferson Davis might ride in triumph up Broadway amid the acclamations of a more enthusiastic multitude than ever assembled on the Continent of America."⁸⁰ It was believed that the North was war weary and would be glad to be through with it all.

However, neutrality triumphed with the news from America, but great harm had been done the Southern cause, and soon Mr. Mason learned from Mr. Benjamin that the President desired him and his secretary to leave London. The mission of Mr. Mason was at an end. And at Richmond the President knew that his foreign policy, so far as England was concerned, could not be based on her recognition of the South.

In a few weeks Davis delivered his address to the Confederate Congress with its sharp criticism of English neutrality and its praise of Southern patriotism.

The long memory of diplomacy perhaps operated in England's mind when she engaged to keep so strict a neutrality over and above its recognition of the belligerent rights of the South. The red dispatch boxes in the Foreign Office undoubtedly contained at least a newspaper clipping of a speech Davis had made as Senator in 1848. "I have no confidence," he said, "in the humanity of Great Britain, the great slave-trader of the world." The work of Wilberforce and the others must have momentarily escaped his mind, for it was some fifteen years since slavery had been abolished under the English flag, and England had paid the slave-owners twenty million pounds for their slaves. At the time he was in the full stride of a plea for Empire, the "manifest destiny" plea, Yucatan, the Isthmus canal project across Nica-

ragua and the Caribbean possibilities, and he wanted no hindrance. "If she [England] should interfere on any pretext in the affairs of Cuba in order to get a footing there," the annexionist went on, "I would regard it as a proper occasion to interfere."³¹

But Davis was once again to find himself enmeshed with the possibilities of recognition, and now coupled with a strange phrase for him to hear. It was in the last harried months of 1864 and those early ones of 1865, with his Congress bitterly against him, that his fertile Secretary of State dared the suggestion. It was hard to accept it. Could England be baited to recognition by the offer of the South to abolish slavery? Mr. Benjamin thought so. He even thought the negroes might be conscripted for military service. The gaps in the ranks of the Confederate Army must be filled. And once again the choice of the Commissioner to present the idea was Mr. Mason, who, since his dignified removal from England, by order of his President, had been serving him in Europe where a diplomat without portfolio might be useful.

To consent to the plan at all was perhaps the biggest thing Jefferson Davis ever did. He wanted Southern independence above everything else. If such a measure would secure it, no sacrifice to years of special pleading was too great.

Mr. Mason found the mission so distasteful that in presenting the idea to Lord Palmerston he avoided the use of the word slavery. The Premier went about the matter with no squeamishness. Slavery had nothing to do with the British attitude towards recognition of the South, he told him. Lord Palmerston was now on very firm ground. He was speaking for Government, and he told Mr. Mason the basis on which England refused the South recognition had

been stated many times. The Earl of Donoughmore, an enthusiastic supporter of the South, in and out of the House of Lords, said it came too late. His belief was that had it come when Lee's invasion of the North was bringing hope to England, nothing could have stopped her recognition of the South.³²

Organized propaganda had for some time shown itself in England and in France.

Confederate agents as well as Commissioners were in both countries, and in time certain portions of the press indicated their presence. The establishment of *The Index* in London—it first appeared in May, 1862, continuing throughout the War—gave the South a most admirable channel, although its utterances were not always acceptable to the *Mercury* and other anti-Administration papers. *The Index* was an enterprise of some public-spirited men of Mobile, who supplied the editor and the means to establish the journal. Later it was to have the approbation of Davis and Mr. Benjamin to the extent of being helped out by the Secret Service fund of the Confederacy. The *Mercury*³³ charged that Henry Hotze, who was a Swiss teaching in Tennessee and at one time Associate Editor of the *Mobile Register*, was a most unfortunate choice for duty with the *Index* to represent the cause of the South in England, and felt more at ease when Mr. De Leon of South Carolina, the Washington correspondent of the *Mercury*, was sent out to "supervise" Mr. Hotze. The presence of a Southern gentleman was needed, the *Mercury* declared.

The English press went through many changes of opinion during the war. The London *Economist*, quoted in the *Richmond Dispatch* of May 14, 1861, said: "There was no ques-

tion whatever of the constitutional right of President Lincoln to treat the hostile Confederation as a treasonable rebellion, which so far as it entrenches on Federal property and laws, he may resist by force." And on the intention of moving in the House of Commons a resolution on the expediency of recognition of the Confederacy it declared: "We can imagine no course more disgraceful to England or less likely to command assent." But this did not long remain its view.

In the main the opinion of the press varied with the news from America and economic pressure. The *Richmond Dispatch* of May 23, 1861, had an editorial entitled "The Probable Course of England," and said: "We mean no disparagement to England, therefore, when we say that, show us what her interests are and we will tell you what her course will be in the present controversy." The sharp attacks in the Northern press after the Proclamation of Neutrality caused a shift to the Southern view. The defeat of Bull Run furnished the press an occasion to revalue their opinions and brought the *Times* correspondent back to London with the New York *Times* title of "Bull Run Russell." Russell was unpopular with the South as well as with the North, notwithstanding the courtesy he had received from Davis and his Secretary of War. Before Bull Run the *Charleston Courier*⁸⁴ was quite outspoken about Russell, declaring that his letters to the *Times* did not represent the conditions, and cited numerous instances. On his return to England Mr. Russell resumed his editorial connection with the *Army and Navy Gazette*, and in that channel sought to square his belief in Northern victory, with the conviction that under no circumstance would reunion result.⁸⁵

Both the *Times* and *Gazette* went rather wide of the mark in their prognostications of Lincoln's reelection and its de-

TO OUR FRIENDS AND SUBSCRIBERS.

THE INDEX was established in May 1862, in the darkest hour of Confederate fortunes, by earnest friends of Southern Independence, with the distinctly expressed object of being the representative, in English journalism, of a gallant and struggling people appealing to the world not only for political, but still more for moral recognition. Since accepting this great trust, THE INDEX has unceasingly laboured, by the combined aid of English and of Southern writers, to enlarge and extend the common ground upon which two nations may cordially meet, which need only to understand each other in order to cherish the warmest mutual appreciation and lasting friendship. The chief and almost the sole difficulty has been, and is still, the callous indifference of the British Government on the one hand, and, on the other, the perplexity, to the European mind, of the unsolved and unprecedented problems involved in the management and education of four millions of the African race, intermingled with a population of the highest Caucasian type. This difficulty could be met only by a liberal fairness to every shade of honest opinion, by an inflexible adherence to truth under all circumstances, and by a bold avowal of convictions, even though ill received. THE INDEX does not claim to be neutral, but it claims to be independent in the highest sense of that word. It is because it must reflect and appeal to, at one and the same time, the public opinion of two countries as yet only imperfectly acquainted, that this somewhat unusual self-description is called for.

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All communications intended for publication should invariably be addressed to 'the Editor of THE INDEX, 361 Strand, W.C.,' and unless authenticated by a responsible name, can receive no attention.

Advertisements should be sent and Money Orders made payable to J. B. HOPKINS, INDEX Office.

THE INDEX.

THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 1865.

The Fall of Richmond.

It is the test of true courage to measure fearlessly.

tion, utterly null as real capital of the Co sense of a convenient the transfer of the se miles further north wa stration and a defiant leaving other parts comparatively unscath less efforts against thi be the best of military tenacity equal to tha hope was possible tha own interests and an and justice, there mi reasons for supporting planting and for year stable and well-order days' march of the But when Europe b stolid impassity, and country were exposc invader, it would l shut up the finest arm a line of fortifications rounded, and crushed far, then, from the eva the hopes of the South confidence and arouse widely scattered popul altogether without the sacrificed to a mistake

We use the term eva a deliberate act, carefu with consummate skil light of Federal accoun and distinct, that the a with heavy loss, becau within their grasp onl thin rear-guard which vast a work could not prior force except un

pendence upon Sherman's taking Atlanta, but adjusted their views to results with skill. Notwithstanding the many fluctuations of opinion the *Times* enjoyed during the War, its great editor had moments of heeding the Government attitude of neutrality. Delane, at one time, was anxious to be very exact in describing the Confederacy, and wrote to Lord Russell's Under Secretary, Sir Arthur Layard, to ask if it were true that Russell, when replying to Mr. Mason and Mr. Slidell, had avoided using the term "The United States" and instead evolved this meticulous expression, "The divided republics of North and South America, formerly the United States," since this latter would seem to foreshadow the recognition of the South. Sir Arthur told Delane that he had been misinformed, and then hinted what the phrase really was: "The Northern and Southern States of the formerly United Republic of North America." Anglo-American relations were exacting much. Sir Arthur, after this remarkable and self-devised title, thought it would be well to let Delane have a copy of Lord Russell's letter, should he approve, since it might "prevent some mischief." Lord Russell thought the mischief done already, but initialed his approval of supplying the copy.⁸⁸

The *Spectator* was, in the main, a supporter of the North, as was also the *Daily News* and the *Morning Star*, John Bright's paper, which reached the group that were to benefit by the Parliamentary reform of 1867.

Nearly all the papers finally came to the view that a reconstruction upon the lines of the Union was impossible, and throughout the war the English attitude was always colored by the sheer sporting proposition of a smaller number engaged against a greater, showing such military skill and

power of resistance as to leave in grave doubt the outcome but never the superb heroism.

It was in 1860 that a young English aristocrat, Lord Robert Cecil, later to be called Lord Salisbury, began writing for the *Quarterly Review*. He had some years earlier contributed to the *Saturday Review*, founded by his brother-in-law, Mr. Beresford Hope, with whom Jefferson Davis and his family later had very pleasant relations. He wrote too for other periodicals in order to increase his income, but the writing for the *Quarterly* was more to have a channel to bring constantly before the ultra-Conservatives the menace, shall we say, of that day, this insinuating force, this rising tide of democracy which was making itself felt: the changing conditions which were to bring about extension of the franchise and so reward such men as Cobden and Bright.

The year before had seen the "fancy franchise bill," as it was called, of Disraeli's, go under. "With a democracy," Disraeli had said somewhat sententiously, "you will find that your property is less valuable and that your freedom is less complete."³⁷ And the ghost was laid for the moment. But by 1867 Parliamentary Reform had advanced the democratic principle for England, and she had learned that democracy had not failed across the sea, notwithstanding the efforts of the press to prove it. And through four of these years between 1859 and 1867 she watched the great struggle of the Civil War, believing that its outcome would act like a water gauge to measure the rise of democracy in the Realm.

The writings of the young aristocrat, Lord Robert Cecil, were to have far-flung consequences. In July, 1861, the *Quarterly* published an article—"Democracy on Trial"—a statement, in fact, of his political *credo*, buttressed as it was

with all those arguments that derive from the aristocratic principle, and the Conservatives were heartened with what they read. Lord Robert had seized upon what he believed to be the failure of democracy as a workable theory, since it could not hold a nation together, to force this point upon the Radicals at home, and notably Bright. This indeed was what had first engaged his interest in the American War, but soon he became one of the staunchest supporters of the Southern cause,³⁸ and did not, as did so many other English sympathizers, change to the Northern view after Antietam.

This first article on Democracy inaugurated the series that were to extend throughout the war and were to be perhaps the most consistent expression of the Southern view not even excepting *The Index*, the subsidized "mouthpiece of the Confederacy," which were uttered in England. The articles were unsigned, the author was unknown if surmised. In late years there was often question as to who the author was. So late as another war that had much to say about securing safety for democracy, the American Ambassador in London heard a group at Lambeth Palace, which included the editor of the *London Times* and Lord Morley, question if the author were Lord Salisbury. But no one knew.³⁹ It waited the publication of the *Life* of this great aristocrat after the World War to reveal the authorship⁴⁰ as the work of this passionate believer in the South. He would not accept the idea of defeat; and so great was the nervous strain upon him as he followed the course of the war that there was anxiety about his health.⁴¹ He saw the passing in his own country of a social order, just as he saw it across the seas; and fear for the one nearest him lent a force and fierceness

⁴⁰ The author is indebted to Mr. George Macaulay Trevelyan for having brought to her attention the literary evidence which fixes the authorship of these *Quarterly* articles as that of Lord Robert Cecil.

to his invective that have made these *Quarterly* articles the sharpest that the English press produced during the War. His view was that "a system which could only secure continued national existence at the cost of a prolonged and desolating civil war was scarcely in a position to despise the older constitutional forms which it claimed to supplant." ⁴²

In 1864, with interest somewhat lagging in the struggle, he was still holding his colors high and paid at that time his tribute to Mr. Davis:

" . . . During those long months of Southern confidence and unreadiness . . . there was one prescient mind in the South restlessly at work preparing and organizing means of resistance. It is useless for the Confederates now to regret, as is too much the fashion among them, that at this moment more was not done. It is easy now to see that it would have been a grand step if all the cotton in the country had been seized by the Confederate Government, but it is more to the point for Southerners to remember with gratitude that . . . President Davis, besides encouraging by his personal efforts the large importation through the mock blockade of gun powder and muskets, called upon Colonel Rains (and a better selection was never made) to establish a large government powder mill at Augusta in Georgia. Simultaneously Southern strength, ingenuity and resource were unfolded and developed day by day, and hour by hour." ⁴³

A master of invective, he used his skill to the end, and at the period when mediation seemed most likely, the *Quarterly* articles provided stirring arguments for the followers of his own school of political theory.

The experiment of democracy as functioning in the United States had been followed with varying interest in England for many years, although it was a French mind that crystal-

lized the significance of the political theory in operation. De Tocqueville's book was source material so far as democracy in America was concerned.

But no English traveler here ever failed to record his observations in a book on his return, and only lack of a reading public need have prevented enlightened opinion in England.

Miss Martineau's rather caustic, spinsterish impressions of conditions in the South, Fanny Kemble found at times to be in error. Miss Martineau's crisp mind worked more eagerly for reform and without the artist's eye to see so much of the beauty in the South that helped Fanny Kemble over some of the appalling things that caught her pity. Both left pictures worth keeping. Basil Hall, with more precision and humor, be it said, had made a real contribution. All these were earlier. It was Anthony Trollope who gave to England a view of the country at war. He was very positive that there was no hope of a reunion of the States and his sympathies were with the North.

But an English clergyman furnished, in brief, the picture for the South. He had lived in the Southland some twenty-one years, a far longer time than most observers give to securing either knowledge or impression. The Reverend T. D. Ozanne, like Trollope, published his book during the war.

"Southern Society," he wrote, "has most of the virtues of an aristocracy, increased in zest by the democratic form of government, and the freedom of discussion on all topics fostered by it. It is picturesque, patriarchal, genial. It makes a landed gentry, it founds families, it favors leisure and field sports; it develops a special class of thoughtful,

responsible, guiding and protecting minds; it tends to elevation of sentiment and refinement of manners." ⁴⁴

Literary England as a whole supported the North but not quickly. Matthew Arnold, quite easily, found little to like in any part of America. After the *Trent* affair he was hopeful that the Americans would take their lesson without war with England. He was impatient of the ties of blood relationship. The relationship of the soul was really all that mattered, and this, he adds, "one has far more with the French, Italians or Germans than with the Americans."

Tennyson, in 1861, who had just refused an offer of £3,000 and his expenses paid to give some readings in America, told James Bryce he thought "the North would be all the better for the separation."

The Brownings and the Rossettis linked their enthusiasms—if it reached that point—with the North. In April, 1861, Elizabeth Barrett Browning was writing to Mrs. Martin that it might be as well to let the Southern States secede. Her fears had been that the North would compromise. She would have had a pecuniary compromise but not one of principle.⁴⁵ England had so settled the matter in 1833.

Robert Browning believed that English sympathy had been with the North on purely anti-slavery grounds. The mood of literary England was like the rest of England—it wavered as different occurrences stirred different feelings.

But the foreign policy of Jefferson Davis remained unchanged. Recognition of the South as an independent nation must come first.

The remaining years of the war brought less friction with the United States Government, while the friends of the South in England continued as before. The future Lord Salisbury allowed no opportunity to slip to uphold the

Southern cause in the *Quarterly Review*, still beating democracy over the head by the aid of its example in the United States. Organizations of all sorts went on their wonted ways with meetings and protests or acclaims. Much of the oratory at the meetings was based on the gathering force towards the democratic principle that saw its beginning in the Parliamentary Reform of 1867. The aristocrats, however, were somewhat at a loss to explain the survival of this principle after a war.

There was to be no higher nor more eloquent tribute to Davis than that by his friend, Lord Campbell, at a meeting in Manchester of the Manchester Southern Independence Association:⁴⁸

No man of reflection, can, in my opinion, glance at the daily life of Mr. Davis without a sentiment which even passes admiration. [Immense cheering] If an independent and despotic power had been granted to him, such as great men are apt to claim under such circumstances—still, to keep the mind engaged upon every part of an almost interminable frontier, to divine the plans of a government whose movements it is difficult to calculate, to prepare for every possible event, to picture each imaginable difficulty, to plan campaigns upon a territory so extensive and under circumstances so unprecedented, would tax the very highest reach of military genius. But this is not the whole of the burden that devolves upon Mr. Davis. This task he is called upon to perform, while at the same time he is accountable to a representative assembly, to a Senate, and to a Cabinet. [Hear] But even that is not the limit of his trials. He has to face these difficulties, to aim at these results, with a free press to criticize, to control, to reprimand him; sometimes to be elated by success, sometimes to be depressed unduly by reverses, and sometimes to reveal to distant armies much which in his opinion it would be more judicious to conceal from

them. The liberty of that press he has not once attempted to control or wished to override. [Cheers] And yet to meet this threefold trial might well exhaust the wisdom of a ruler, the resources of a general, and the temper of an angel. [Cheers] Come what may, gentlemen, you cannot be deprived of the reflection that, in your day, according to your power, although divided from him by the ocean, you have done something to uphold one of the bravest and noblest minds which Providence has formed, in one of the loftiest and hardest enterprises with which the fortunes of the world have ever been identified.

But Lord Campbell was not the Government of England.

A WEDDING in his family delayed Mr. Adams' sailing to take up his duties as Minister to the Court of St. James's. Otherwise he might have been in England when the famous Proclamation of Neutrality was issued. The *Trent* affair detained Mr. Slidell or he might have begun sooner his importunings for an interview with the Emperor and presenting the case of the South to His Majesty. Even before this greatly desired meeting took place, Mr. Slidell had various reasons to think his mission might have happy results. These as they occurred were reported to Richmond. Davis was to be encouraged. It was a gloomy period in the affairs of the Confederacy and any buoyant reports sent from France might ease the President's troubled mind.

The choice of Mr. Slidell as Commissioner to France was obvious. His long residence in New Orleans and marriage to a Creole aristocrat made at once some acceptable qualifications for a French mission. He was "adroit, full of device, and fond of intrigue" as William H. Russell observed. His thin lips and his rather penetrating gray eyes were indicative of a will and a willingness to measure men for his purposes. His family moved always in the *beau monde* whether in New Orleans or Paris, and he was flattered that on two occasions the Empress Eugenie had sent for him at her receptions. He was aware too that she was believed to have influence in affairs of state.

The work he had before him was wholly to his liking. Born in New York, he lived there for thirty years, but went

to New Orleans to practice law and became an ardent Louisianian. As a United States Senator from that State he indulged his gift of good address, but he left the Senate to become a violent secessionist. Even Consul Bunch was mindful of his good manners and so informed the Foreign Office as early as 1861.¹ But his knowledge of men, thought to be so astute and accurate, fell a little short when he faced the "pale man" at Vichy and failed to notice that he listened more often than he spoke.

During the early spring of 1862 Mr. Slidell learned that the Emperor was adroit at finding means to make the notion of recognition of the South appear to come as from a popular demand of the French. Slidell reported to Richmond that steps had been taken to enlist the good offices of the Chambers of Commerce of the different principal cities to ask for the restoration of commercial relations with the States of the South. It was the time the pro-Southern press, which were the semi-official organs, in France, were urging recognition in a vigorous form. The blockade had begun to tell. The Commissioner's real encouragement came when he learned, among other things, that the Mediterranean fleet of the French Navy had been ordered to lay in a three months' store.²

France, as well as England, was having hard times in its cotton industry with a hundred thousand or more workmen in need. By the end of the year the distress had extended and the actual want and suffering was so great that a public subscription was started. But the response was not large and Government aid finally resulted. There was seemingly no Gladstone to find employment for the people in the *parcs* of the great estates. But the profiteers benefited. Before this time it had been easy to lay the distress to the operations

of Cobden's treaty with England as various other industries were affected, but by 1863 it was chiefly cotton manufacturing that suffered. Yet in another year that too had passed.³ Economic pressure seems not to have been so potent in developing French opinions either for neutrality or for recognition of the South. Rather it was that strange undercurrent rushing on to the flood which was to be the voice of the people making for Republican France, as it was in England in the support of the so-called Radicals, Cobden and Bright.

It was, as a matter of fact, not until July, 1862, that the coveted meeting with Napoleon III occurred. The Emperor was taking his cure at Vichy. The house where he stayed was a small one, with only one sal^{on} as Mr. Slidell found. He was in good mood when he received the Southern Commissioner, giving seventy minutes of his health-seeking time to Mr. Slidell, during which he assured him of his interest.

The principle of self-government, so dear to him, for which the South was contending, easily won his sympathies, and he doubted if ever the Union could be reëstablished. He would be glad to show these sympathies, but he must always keep the relations between France and England at their friendliest and he could not do anything without her coöperation. At this point the Emperor asked Mr. Slidell's view as to the condition of affairs. The polite diplomat who had been chosen for this post because of singular fitness and his knowledge of French—he had already told the Emperor that it was the language habitually spoken in his family—found it wiser to ask the Emperor's permission to reply in English. He employed his native tongue to advantage saying, in substance, that the South had enough man

power and always would have, but that arms, powder and clothing were needed. This led most easily to a discussion of the blockade. Mr. Slidell became eloquent at this point, saying that there was great surprise in the South that the neutral Powers had submitted to the blockade, since it was quite ineffective, and especially that France had thus submitted, because heretofore she had never failed to assert neutral rights. The Emperor confessed, so Mr. Slidell assured Mr. Benjamin, that he had made a great mistake and one he regretted, namely, in having France respect the blockade.

The suggestion that the Emperor send a fleet to break the blockade and receive one hundred thousand bales of cotton, valued at \$12,500,000, was, however, arresting, especially when Mr. Slidell assured him that the American marine comprised second-class steamers and that the French cruisers could easily go by the fortifications of New York and Boston, or could successfully bombard Fortress Monroe or the ships in Chesapeake Bay.⁴ He made it very clear to the Emperor that this subsidy offer of cotton was made exclusively to France. Mr. Mason in London was quite unaware that he had even the authority to make it.

Mr. Slidell had been in France long enough to have learned from the press, as well as doubtless from M. Thouvenel, of the distress in the cotton manufacturing districts, and that memorials were being sent to the Emperor.⁵ The suggestion of the cotton present was born in the Oriental mind of Mr. Benjamin, but his old associate and commissioner had taken a happy moment to bring it to the Emperor's attention. Trained in the Benjamin school, Mr. Slidell told the Emperor that England no longer could be considered the friend of the Confederacy because of her

recognition of the blockade, but soon said to him that his colleague from London, for the first time since his arrival, was hopeful that there might be recognition by England and coöperation with His Majesty. The Emperor's excellent knowledge of English could have scarcely failed to reach the full significance of this statement.

The Mexican situation too came into the conversation. The Emperor foreshadowed difficulties with the United States. But the Commissioner was ready with a plan which should relieve the Emperor's anxiety. It was that as the United States recognized President Juarez, who was, of course, the enemy of His Majesty, the South would unite with France against him. This, too, must have held the Emperor's attention. For it was only three months before that the Spanish and British ships were withdrawn from Vera Cruz where they had gone some months earlier with the French in the interest of securing some claims, and France alone was left to undertake debt collection by invasion. The clash at La Puebla in May brought reënforcements from France, and the Navy Archduke at Miramar, looking out over his oleanders and olives and myrtles to the blue of the Adriatic beyond, began to be more willing to listen to his Carlotta's ambitions to be an Empress, and to renounce his own to the Hapsburg succession.

The Emperor then went on to discuss with the Commissioner, in the event of mediation, what boundaries would the South consider. This was one of those moments of partitioning the United States, always so engaging to the European mind at that time. Mr. Slidell met that easily. The States which comprised the Confederacy would be insisted upon, "leaving the people of Kentucky, Missouri and Maryland to decide for themselves whether they would or would

not unite their fortunes with ours.”⁶ The interview remained in Mr. Slidell’s mind as marking the Emperor’s graciousness. He had indicated that it would not be difficult for Mr. Slidell to see him again. The Commissioner did not seem to realize that the man who had accustomed himself to silence at Ham had not betrayed himself.

What Davis learned from his Secretary of State was that his Commissioner had reported that the Emperor had in no wise committed himself as to the answer Mr. Slidell’s demand for recognition would have when presented in the usual channel.

It was in the spacious rooms of St. Cloud some three months later when the Emperor received Mr. Slidell again. It was upon this occasion that the Emperor sounded him out on the proposed joint mediation with England and Russia, which was later proposed to England. The Emperor was disposed towards an armistice for six months and the opening of the Southern ports. The voice from Richmond had not spoken and Mr. Slidell was vague in his reply. The conversation turning to the helpful point as to ships, Mr. Slidell told of the enterprise then going on in England and sought some “verbal assurance” that the placing of guns and men upon the vessels might not be watched too closely by France. The Emperor made the happy suggestion that the ships could be built as, say, for the Italian Government? He would consult the Minister of Marine. Nice and Savoy, now in French territory, doubtless made the Italian Government come most easily to his mind. The interview concluded with the Emperor’s shaking hands, and Mr. Slidell could not have been mistaken about what had been said, for the conversation was again in English.

In the early part of 1863, Mr. Benjamin was sending good tidings to Mr. Slidell. The blockade had been broken at several Southern ports. "I enclose you," he writes, "the official circular of the breaking of the blockade at Charleston. The blockade at Galveston was still more effectually raised by the capture of the *Harriet Lane* and the blowing up of the *Westfield*, which was the flagship of the squadron; and we have just received a telegram, somewhat imperfectly worded from Galveston, announcing the capture of the enemy's forces at Sabine Pass, the capture of thirteen guns, stores of the value of one million of dollars and one hundred and nine prisoners, . . . I shall apprise foreign Consuls of the opening of these two additional ports of Galveston and Sabine Pass." ⁷

A year later the Commissioner was so fortunate as to be received at the Tuileries. The danger in the way of his hope of recognition of the Confederate States was French commerce and also possible trouble with the United States about the Mexican expedition. The Emperor seemed to have been a little uneasy about the success of this pet project of his as well as of his Empress.

By now the French troops had reversed their repulse of the year before at La Puebla. The city had fallen and the Emperor told Mr. Slidell that the city of Richmond was illuminated upon hearing the news. It was to be sure an item published in the *Constitutionnel* ⁸ which obviously had been brought to the Emperor's attention. But Mr. Slidell restrained himself and did not tell His Majesty he regarded it as apocryphal.⁹ The French press had represented the North as suffering disappointment.

But the Emperor's real contribution to this third and last

visit of Mr. Slidell's was his agreement that the ships of war might be built at Nantes and Bordeaux, but their destination concealed.

In December of this year President Davis in his address to his Congress found little of encouragement to say in regard to European recognition. He accused England outright of a preferred neutrality, a neutrality that helped the enemy. He spoke more agreeably about the coming of the young Navy Archduke to Mexico as being not unacceptable to the Confederacy, and wisely left unsaid many things about France. But he warned his people not to hope for European recognition. He was heartening them for the work ahead. The year had seen the matchless charge of Pickett at Gettysburg, and Lee's withdrawal the third day of the battle, and at the same time the fall of Vicksburg, and Davis found himself forced to dwell more on the immediate needs of the Army than on the winging hope of European intervention.

The fate of Vicksburg had another meaning to the Confederacy. An avenue for bringing supplies from Mexico¹⁰ had been cut off. That in one way was more serious than the more obvious loss of the river and the occupation of that part of Mississippi. It was, however, only another year before Maximilian's Court in Mexico was giving the South an opportunity to accredit a Minister to it, and Davis had devised a bubble argument to include in his speech to Congress to show how great was the understanding of the South with a people who accepted a monarchy rather than a republic.

But it was sympathy wasted, for the Confederate Minister was not recognized when he arrived at Mexico, and the United States Government had made it very clear indeed that a foreign Government establishing itself on this con-

continent interfered with the only really definite foreign policy of the United States—the Monroe Doctrine.

Mr. Slidell still had work to do with his ships, but the situation became at least delicate when he told the Emperor's Minister of Foreign Affairs that their building was the idea of the Emperor. Mr. Slidell as a diplomat was found wanting.

In the meantime the shipbuilding activities had progressed at Bordeaux under the skillful direction of Captain Bullock of the Confederate Navy, and the guarantees of payment were being executed by the firm of Erlanger & Company, one of whose members became Mr. Slidell's son-in-law. The official authorization of the building and equipping of these vessels was under the fantastic legend that they were for protection against pirates and were to travel the seas of the Far East. The Japanese or Chinese Government doubtless seemed a wiser or more remote purchaser than the Italian Government, as the Emperor had humorously said to Mr. Slidell. The active intervention of the United States Government in reminding the French Government of the Emperor's Proclamation of Neutrality finally produced its effect, but not before the ram *Stonewall* had made a picturesque detour from French to Danish and then to Confederate control when riding in the harbor of Ferrol. The somewhat belated neutrality finally worked, and by the time the ram had reached Cuban waters Appomattox had sealed the fate of the Confederate Army, and Davis' capture that of the Confederacy.¹¹

Mr. Slidell had engaged himself also in seeking to create public opinion favorable to the Confederacy, but on the arrival of Mr. De Leon at Paris that burden was removed

from him. Early in February, not long after reaching Paris, he wrote Mr. Benjamin that France was getting its knowledge of the situation in America mainly through the "fictions and exaggerations for which the Northern press is famous." He felt the importance of applying a remedy at once, and thought by the expenditure of a few thousand dollars the advocacy of the Southern cause through some one of the leading journals could be secured. He had found that a number of them were already well disposed, and the active support of one could certainly be obtained by a small expenditure.¹² And Mr. Benjamin and Davis saw eye to eye in this, and Mr. Hotze and the Secret Service fund were the response.

The Index, which was operating with some success in London under Mr. Hotze's direction, had no counterpart in France. But portions of the French press seemed in time open to some of Mr. De Leon's persuasions, so much so in fact that the relations between Mr. Slidell and Mr. De Leon became strained. Mr. De Leon was so unfortunate as to have an intercepted letter reach the Federal press and, in time, the French Liberal press, in which he said: "They [the French] are a far more mercenary race than the English, and we must buy golded opinions from them if at all. Such was the secret of Dr. Franklin's success."¹³

The *Mercury's* opinion of its former Washington correspondent must have changed at this point, for Mr. De Leon gave way to Mr. Hotze, who was unremitting in praise of himself to Mr. Benjamin.

The Liberal press, such as the *Journal des Débats*, the *Temps*, and the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, was not favorable to the South, but the *Siècle*, the *Moniteur*, the *Constitutionnel*, the *Patrie*, these semi-official papers and the Clerical

P.S.

I add hereto an extract from a letter recently received by me from a gentleman who is a professor in the University of Virginia and is represented by all of whom I have made enquiry, as being of the highest character and respectability. It is a very singular statement and you ought not to remain ignorant of a fact which may serve as a clue to unravel any secret designs that may be entertained in France.

Extract.

Three years ago I had the honor of an honor's conversation with the Emperor of the French at the Villa Eugénie in Biarritz. After having exhausted all the little information I could afford him, draining me à sec, and leaving me after all under the impression that he knew more of all the subjects on which he had examined me, than I did myself, he turned with peculiar and undisguised eagerness to the Mexican Question. I had then just returned from Cuba and glanced I had thoroughly informed myself as to the condition of things there and in the Gulf. I was

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soon undeceived. He knew the very number of guns on the Movers, the sums the United States had spent on the fortifications in Florida, the exports and imports of Galveston and Matamoras, in short everything, which well-informed local agents could have reported to an experienced statesman eager of information. He examined me again on Texas and its population, the disposition of the French residents, the tendencies of the German Colonists, the feeling on the Mexican frontier. Twice I resumed - for well, he repeated: *La Louisiane, n'est-ce pas qu'elle est Française au fond?* At last he turned to the colonies and then stated in round terms, finding that I quoted from his *Idées Napoléoniennes*, the well-known words, *Oh bien, il faut reconstruire l'Empire là bas.*

After having received this cue to his questions and the unexpected interest he deigned to show in so insignificant a person, I was enabled better to follow his ideas and more fully to answer his questions. From what I could then gather, I was fully persuaded that he proposed to seek in Mexico a compensation for the lost colonies in

in the West Indies, which, he said, could not be recovered sans nous brouiller avec nos alliés. He insisted upon it that France must sooner or later have a pied à terre on the Florida coast for the purpose of protecting her commerce in the Gulf, for, he added, Nous ne voulons pas d'un autre Gibraltar de ce côté là. Finally, I think, he revived in his mind the possibility of recovering a foothold in Louisiana, although he never stated this purpose in so many words, perhaps from a cautious regard to my position.

Then came, of course, other points mentioned in a conversation carried on with his usual rapidity of thought and marvellous conciseness of expression, but I venture here only to mention those I can state in precise terms, as having a direct bearing on the question of French policy in the South.

I beg leave to add that his remarks made so deep an impression on my mind, that I jotted down the salient points for my own guidance and as interesting points d'appui for future researches. Upon my return to Paris I had the opportunity of mentioning some of them to

M^r Drouin de L'Huys, whom I have the advantage of knowing personally. He seemed to be not only fully aware of the peculiar views of the Emperor, but added much to explain them.

His point of view was, of course, a different one and as he was then out of office perhaps more decided than it would be at this moment. Although these views and expressions are now three years old,

It need not suggest to you how tenacious the Emperor is in his long-prepared purposes, especially when they concern his openly avowed plan of recovering all that can be recovered of the great Empire.

press, were.¹⁴ The changing fortunes as the great struggle went on frequently varied French opinion. France as well as England was watching an experiment in democracy and lining up with the North or the South as suited the interest of the individual in the experiment. The French lover of liberty and equality found himself supporting the North. The French mind that preferred the dissolution of a democracy and sensed the pride of land and type of patriotism the South had shown, put its allegiance with the Confederacy. This was the view of the French editor Prévost Paradol.¹⁵

The expedition to Mexico was another enterprise, which from the first, had engaged the French press with different views. An expedition, as we saw, that began as a force to collect claims, with England and Spain similarly employed, soon found France carrying on alone. America was invited but declined to take part. The other allies were not in sympathy with the political interests occupying France. The dream of empire was always in the mind of the Emperor, and the Empress was no less eager. The Emperor's attachment to America lay in the familiar phrase, *Eh bien, il faut reconstruire l'Empire la-bas*. And for a long time he had provided himself with many details that would prove helpful in such an eventuality. The year before the war at Biarritz, he had amazed a professor from the University of Virginia with whom he talked with his knowledge of the United States; its expenditures on the fortifications in Florida, the commerce from the Gulf States, and so on. But the possibilities in Mexico were back of it all. Mr. Benjamin seems to have learned of this from a letter of the Professor's,¹⁶ and doubtless he thought the information it contained might be useful

¹⁶ Through the courtesy of the Librarian at the University of Virginia, extensive search was made to discover who this professor might be. It was perhaps Professor Schele de Vere, a Swiss, then in Europe on his honeymoon.

to Mr. Slidell, for he made a long extract which details the interview and adds it as a postscript to one of his exemplary communications.

The Napoleon complex made the military display the source of appeal to win the support of France to the undertaking, and soon the Archduke and his Carlotta were outward bound to be lost in the maze of an Emperor's dream.

Napoleon III at this time, the early part of 1864, was giving Mr. Hotze a good deal of concern. He informed Mr. Benjamin that at the moment it was definite that this most amiable young Archduke was finally to start on the Mexican venture, the Emperor chose to send a Bonaparte prince, a son of Lucien, to this new Empire he had devised on the American continent.¹⁷ And he was also making neutrality rather ostentatious, so Henry Hotze informed Richmond. Maximilian, while in Paris before leaving for Mexico, refused to see either Mr. Slidell or the United States Minister, Mr. Dayton. But Mr. Hotze relieves Mr. Benjamin's mind at once by saying that those informed said that the Archduke realizes perfectly that "the independence and friendship of the South form the only safe guarantee for his throne."¹⁸ Only a month before Mr. Slidell had written Mr. Benjamin that "his friend" at the Foreign Office had told him of seeing the paper on which the Archduke had cited the essentials to the success of his rule in Mexico, and "the recognition of the Confederacy headed the list."¹⁹ So doubtless this meticulous neutrality of the Archduke was not seriously disturbing to the Commissioner nor to the Cabinet at Richmond.

Maximilian I, as he was to be called, set off with smart new liveries made in Brussels and high hopes of crushing

this strange thing, democracy, showing its head near by "the bed of roses of Montezuma and Yturbide."

One of his plans was, and he sent a letter to the Emperor by Prince Metternich, then Austrian Ambassador at Paris, asking him to say so, that if the Confederate States of America were recognized, it must be stipulated that they recognize and guarantee the independence of Mexico. Further, that if the Juarez Government gave any permission for the passage of Northern troops, it must be met with sharp protest.²⁰ The Emperor approved this plan of the Archduke's. It served as a pretext of delay, and he put himself on record as not failing to bring up the question when the moment should be opportune. The guarantee of Mexico as a condition of recognizing the Southern States was indeed an admirable idea.

But the taste of the former Archduke, who had contrived so much beauty for his little rocky peninsula at Miramar, with granite from the Tyrol to make the terraces, was on his arrival at Mexico City deeply engaged with the beauty that now lay before him. And the perplexities of Empire building were exchanged for the more immediate results that could be seen in the theaters and palaces. But at the last he was chided by his chief that the building of theaters and palaces was not so important as putting the country on a sound financial basis and creating a national Mexican Army in order that the French troops might return to France. An Indian's rifle shot at Queretaro silenced criticism and a merciful cloud darkened Carlotta's mind to the end. The Emperor's own debacle was only five years away. It began the July morning in 1870 when he rode out from St. Cloud, and the road led to Sedan.

It was in the April of 1863 that Mr. Mason, who was,

so Henry Adams thought, just "one eccentric more" in London, united with Mr. Slidell in the effort to put through the Confederate Foreign Cotton Loans of some \$15,000,000 through the Erlanger Company. It was this loan which gave the Confederate Government money for the purchase of the iron-clad cruisers and corvettes, the construction of which had concerned Mr. Slidell so agreeably with the Emperor.

It was at this time the Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Mallory, was writing the President what that branch of the Government needed. "Congress has in secret session," he writes, "appropriated for the service of the department abroad [the Laird rams and those in France had to be paid for] \$5,200,000. This amount we require in currency equal to sterling. It is understood by the Secretary of the Treasury and myself that this appropriation is to be paid out of the Erlanger loan, but he notifies me that he will charge this Department an exchange of three to one."²¹

The idea of the loan was, at first, not acceptable to the Confederate Government. But Mr. Slidell had intimated that it carried with it almost the certainty that "powerful influences" would be secured for the South, and the gentleman at Richmond finally authorized it. It never had the official recognition of the London Stock Exchange,²² but the *London Times* and the *Economist* believed in it and supported it in their columns, and in two days' time it was three times over-subscribed in London. It gave Mr. Mason the opportunity to write Mr. Benjamin, "Cotton is king at last."

But the loan was not convincing as "sound investment," and the fluctuations began that finally resulted in using the money taken in the subscription "to bull the market." And Mr. Mason duly reported to Mr. Benjamin of the operations

employed on the London market to sustain the loan, a course in which he felt quite justified, because of "other machinations" which he thought had been set in motion to depress it.

The years went on and when the cotton famine was pressing hard upon France, the Emperor, without England, offered to be the mediator between the South and the United States, but the offer was declined, and the old efforts of recognition through coöperation with England had to be resumed.

The Emperor and Mr. Slidell did not meet again after the last interview until by chance, at the races in the Bois de Boulogne in 1864, when His Majesty shook hands with Mr. Slidell and asked him what effect the fall of Atlanta would have upon the war. He assured the Emperor it was of little consequence, not at all so great as Europe fancied, for all valuable machinery and material had been removed before Sherman's occupation.²³ He did tell him, however, in response to his inquiry about any prospects of peace, that McClellan's acceptance of the Democratic nomination doubtless meant Mr. Lincoln's reëlection and no peace. The second handshake of the Emperor on leaving would in earlier days have stirred hopes of recognition of the South. Now Mr. Slidell knew his Emperor.

And Mr. Benjamin and Mr. Davis knew him as well. That same month the Secretary found leisure to set down in detail to Mr. Slidell the views held at Richmond of the French Government. Professions of friendliness were offset by acts that were injurious.

Then there was the matter of the relations with Mexico. The Confederacy had been approached, indirectly to be sure, by the Emperor Maximilian, with a view to establishing

friendly relations. But it appears that Napoleon III was averse to this, and tried to have Maximilian gain favor with the North. The sum of these acts was the failure of the delivery of the ships which the Emperor had acquiesced in the Confederate Government's purchasing in France. The other unfriendly acts included the detention of the *Rappahannock* for more than six months, an act Mr. Benjamin regarded as wholly unneutral.²⁴ The Secretary of State's disappointment, and undoubtedly that of Davis too, that recognition had not been given the South, led him to forget that when the French neutrality moved a point, it moved in favor of the South. He cautioned the Commissioner not to display any indignation which might lead the Emperor's Government to think the Confederacy unfriendly, but he at least made clear the position of the President on the whole intercourse—notably, that the Emperor seemed, strangely enough, intent only upon promoting his own interests. This then was the pass to which the overtures of amity had brought France and the Confederacy.

The South believed, as did Mr. Slidell, that the sympathy of Napoleon III was with them. Judge Lamar thought so, and that his policy was to frighten the Yankees into supporting his Mexican undertaking. "He no doubt would be glad," the Judge wrote to Mrs. Clay, "to give French neutrality in American affairs for Yankee neutrality in Mexican affairs."²⁵

But Mr. Davis' third Commissioner in Europe, Mr. A. Dudley Mann, was less moved than most by the seeming sympathy of the Emperor. In 1864 he was writing to Mr. Davis that "we never had, nor have now, anything favorable to expect. His Imperial Majesty is deaf to international justice and blind to its usages, when he conceives that Mexico

may possibly be involved in danger." He then gave his President some valuable information; namely, that he had it upon good authority that there was an understanding between the Cabinets of the Tuileries and Washington. "The latter," he wrote, "is to consider the Monroe Doctrine as utterly obsolete, and that for this concession [*sic*] the former will decline for an indefinite period to establish diplomatic relations with us."²⁶ This Mr. Mann declared to be "a monstrous wrong," but one from which there was no redress.

The hoped-for recognition did indeed seem further and further away. Mr. Davis, intent upon the work of carrying on a great war, was doubtless not following too minutely the European hare-and-hound race for a balance of power on this side of the Atlantic. But he surely would have agreed with the Spanish writer Rodrigo, that "Mexico and the Southern States were the two advanced redoubts which Europe in its own interest should have thrown up against the American colossus."²⁷

The Mexican plan as devised by Napoleon III and talked over with Disraeli so far back as in 1857 was slowly wearing out.

The Austrian Ambassador, Metternich's long sojourn at Paris probably accounted for his view as to what might eventuate when the American war was at an end. It was the familiar one that the North would annex Canada and the South Mexico, but his mind went a little further, and he went on record as a statesman, certainly one of the very few, who thought that the Monroe Doctrine applied, in principle, might be of service. That is, since the European occupation in Mexico was "a direct negation" of the Doctrine, it might be well for the South, having annexed Mexico, to

uphold the Monroe Doctrine.²⁸ This was indeed a new point of view.

In the years after the war Mr. Davis was in France. He was seeing his old Commissioner Mr. Slidell in Paris, who had found no occasion or wish to return to Louisiana, and Mr. Dudley Mann, who also made France his home. The meetings were very agreeable.

Jefferson Davis had his own dignity as well as an excellent memory. When the Emperor sent one of his aides to tell Mr. Davis that His Majesty would offer him an audience, he declined. This recognition of the Emperor's came too late.

THE morning service in St. Paul's was going on. It was Sunday, April 2, 1865. The President was in his pew, which in itself was reassuring, although Mrs. Davis was not there. She and the children had left several days earlier for Charlotte, North Carolina, under the care of Davis' private secretary, Burton N. Harrison. For some time Davis had been counseling that families should leave the city and go to the South or West. One element in the counsel was supplies. Sheridan had been through the Shenandoah Valley. There was scarcely food enough for the Army of Northern Virginia. The people who could go South would, at least, not be taking food from the Army. The President of the Confederacy had set an example by sending his own family there.

A dispatch bearer from the War Department came to the Church with a message for Mr. Davis. General Lee had notified him that the Confederate Army was forced to evacuate Petersburg, and that inevitably the Richmond lines would soon follow. He counseled the evacuation of Richmond during the night, unless he sent other advice. Davis read the communication and quietly left the church. When this tall, slim, rather austere man passed down the aisle and out into the sunshine of a Virginia April day, there went with him that of which he had been the symbol—it was the end of an idea.

But the end, as all ends, seemed sudden. No word had reached even the editors' desks in the different newspaper

offices that Lee would begin the withdrawal of his troops towards Lynchburg, as it turned out, rather than Danville, as the President had thought.

The sudden stirring throughout the city that soon followed was a surprise to all save perhaps to this grave, rather tragic man who had so quietly just left the church. Only the day before Davis had written Lee—"The question is often asked of me, 'Will we hold Richmond?' to which my only answer is, if we can, it is purely a question of military power.¹ And now word had been brought to him that it was beyond the military power to do it. The quiet city that had been for four years the capital of the Confederacy was the heart of the South, and there is no life without the heart. When Richmond fell, the Confederate States of America were at an end.

The long months since summer had been employed by the Army of the Potomac in the warfare of attrition. By this April day it had done its work, and when Lee sent the message to Davis, Grant had been bombarding Petersburg and the meeting at Appomattox Court House was but nine days away.

Before the day was done the Sunday routine was sharply broken, and the city that till now, though threatened, had never wholly lost its peacetime freedom, was to be flung into the wild alarms of an evacuation.

Davis went at once to his office and then tried to reach the members of his Cabinet and the heads of Departments to give them the intelligence he had received as well as his own decision. The offices were closed for the day and some time was lost in reaching the various officials. Benjamin, found at his home engaged with the most recent foreign papers, was soon on his way to the State Department. The

EVENING PRAYER.

by thee, we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. *Amen.*

A Collect for Aid against Perils.

O LORD, our heavenly Father, by whose Almighty power we have been preserved this day; By thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Prayer for the President of the Confederate States, and all in Civil Authority.

O LORD, our heavenly Father, the highest and mighty Ruler of the universe, who dost from thy throne behold all the dwellers upon earth; Most heartily we beseech thee with thy favour to behold and bless thy servant THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES, and all others in authority; and replenish them with the grace of thy Holy Spirit, that they may always incline to thy will, and walk in thy way. Endue them plentifully with heavenly gifts; grant them in health and prosperity long to live; and finally, after this life, to attain everlasting joy and felicity, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Prayer for the Clergy and People.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, send down upon our Bishops, and other Ministers of the Gospel, thy Holy Spirit, that they may be faithful to the congregation committed to them, and may be fruitful in the Spirit of thy

EVENING PRAYER.

grace; and, that they may truly please thee, pour upon them the continual dew of thy blessing. Grant this, O Lord, for the honour of our Advocate and Mediator, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Prayer for all Conditions of Men.

O GOD, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech thee for all sorts and conditions of men; that thou wouldst be pleased to make thy ways known unto them, thy saving health unto all nations. More especially we pray for thy holy Church universal; that it may be so guided and governed by thy good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. Finally, we commend to thy fatherly goodness all those who are any ways afflicted, or distressed, in mind, body, or estate; that it may please thee to comfort and relieve them, according to their several necessities; giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions. And this we beg for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

A General Thanksgiving.

ALMIGHTY God, Father of all mercies, we, thy unworthy servants, do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us, and to all men. We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all, for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus

twirling of his gold-headed cane, the inevitable "mild Havana" and the perpetual smile were to convince the passers-by that the Secretary of State was upon some usual errand.² The other members of the Cabinet, who had been summoned from their respective churches as was the President, were soon at the Executive offices. Davis' orders were that the Government of the Confederacy should move that night to Danville, at the same time that General Lee was evacuating Petersburg. A special train was to take him and his Cabinet, but it was nearly midnight before the necessary arrangements had been finished. The various Departments were assembling their papers and boxes, and wagons were loaded with them and hurried off to the depot to be put aboard the train. It had been thought that the cover of the night would make the evacuation less startling to the people. But by afternoon when it was once sensed what had come upon the city the long stream of refugees with their household goods poured out from all parts of Richmond. They sought the wide spaces beyond. It was afternoon too when Davis had finished his work at the Executive offices. He then went to his home. On the way the people came out from their houses and asked him if it were true, this rumor of evacuation. It was, he said, but he hoped "we would under better auspices again return." He recalled in later years how it was the ladies who said, "If the success of the cause requires you to give up Richmond we are content." It touched him deeply. He had been under almost constant censure by his own people for many months past.

This hurrying crowd was the signal too for the rabble that had infested the city during the war, the type that Davis had turned away from their ghoulisn intent in the so-called bread riots of 1863. It was their moment to gather in crowds and

wait their sinister chance. And they were hunger maddened. The patrols instituted by order of the Mayor and City Council went about their business in a half-hearted fashion and thinned away before the night was done.

Then, like a fury, doom swept over the city.

The order had been given to destroy all the liquor. But it flowed through the streets and gutters and the rabble caught it as best they could. They and the rest of the civilian population knew law and order had gone when they saw the three bridges across the James in flames. It meant that General Ewell had taken the last of the troops over them.

Presently more light flamed up against the sky. The order to destroy the warehouses had been obeyed with great care. But it soon meant a holocaust, and the crowds with their little savings of household things still went on through the night out towards the darkness. There would be no fire there. Others got no further than Capitol Square. Here one might perhaps breathe, for a smoke pall lay over the city. Here, too, odd bits of household things were piled—broken furniture, things thrown out as houses had burned. The shouting and uncertain cries changed with the sound of explosions.

In the early morning the clippity-clop of horses' feet was the first signal of military occupation. A squadron of Massachusetts troopers, sent by General Weitzel, had entered the city undisturbed. A little later their guidons were stacked in Capitol Square. The wild night was over. Davis and such members of his Cabinet as were with him were bumping over the war worn rails towards Danville. His knowledge of the firing of the warehouses that caused the conflagration came subsequently from others. But he clears the soldiers of both armies of all responsibility in the matter.³

A week later, the day after Appomattox, when young Charles Francis Adams' regiment came into Richmond, the city lay quiet and in repose on its seven hills with the rivers in peaceful flow. The wild turmoil was as something long gone by. What Adams did hear was that Lee had surrendered. His detail took him on towards Petersburg.

It was a scene of devastation through the camps of the two armies. The stumps of trees and huts marked the encampments, with roads "now leading nowhere, now whither." There were the rifle pits, abatis and forts all about. It was the stillness—the sense of it all being "freshly deserted" that stirred him. He thought it would be years before "the scars would disappear from the soil." ⁴

Even by the 5th of April Davis had been unable to communicate with Lee. He was later to learn that Lee had taken the Army toward Lynchburg with a half-formed hope of reaching the mountains, there to take up the defensive. It was not unlike his own hope to take the Confederate Government and himself to the trans-Mississippi as where he could more easily seek to make better terms of peace. The trans-Mississippi seemed a hinterland of hope and promise. Three days later he was writing his wife from Danville that he still had not heard from General Lee and that he would "conform his movements to the military necessities of the case." They were setting up the machinery of Government; there would be an executive office where current business could be transacted. At this time he is unwilling to leave Virginia, yet he does not know where in her borders "the requisite houses for the Departments and the Congress could be found." But with such details in doubt he still feels he must hearten his people and explain as well the need that

compelled the evacuation. So for the last time on April 5 he issues a message:

The General-in-Chief found it necessary to make such movements of his troops as to uncover the Capital. It would be unwise to conceal the moral and material injury to our cause resulting from its occupation by the enemy. It is equally unwise and unworthy of us to allow our energies to falter and our efforts to become relaxed under reverses, however calamitous they may be. It is for us, my countrymen, to show by our bearing under reverses, how wretched has been the self-deception of those who have believed us less able to endure misfortune with fortitude than to encounter danger with courage.

We have now entered upon a new phase of the struggle. . . . Let us but will it and we shall be free.

Animated by that confidence in your spirit and fortitude which never yet failed me, I announce to you, fellow countrymen, that it is my purpose to maintain your cause with my whole heart and soul; that I will never consent to abandon to the enemy one foot of the soil of any of the States of the Confederacy.

To Virginia, who has had to receive the main shock of the war, he makes a specific promise:

That if by the stress of numbers, we should be compelled to a temporary withdrawal from her limits or those of any other border State, we will return until the baffled and exhausted enemy shall abandon in despair his endless and impossible task of making slaves of a people resolved to be free.

Let us, then, not despond, my countrymen, but, relying on God, meet the foe with fresh defiance and with unconquered and unconquerable hearts.

JEFFERSON DAVIS.

In after years he said this last proclamation of his to his people was "over-sanguine." It is not Davis at his best, but it is an admirable instance of the haughty pride that admitted of no discouragement. He was heartening his people to the end.

It was five days later that young Lieutenant Wise rode through to Danville to tell the President of the Confederacy that Lee had surrendered. It was the first word he had received.

The Confederate Government moved again. Davis' hope that it might be established elsewhere in Virginia failed. And they moved on to Greensboro in North Carolina. There he and his Cabinet waited to make further decision. A place was found for the President at the house of Colonel John Taylor Wood of his staff. The Cabinet took up their quarters in an old passenger car, with a negro boy to cook for them in the field close by. Foraging brought some results—there were some naval stores that had been brought from Richmond that could be tapped, and Mr. Trenholm's hampers were still not exhausted. This Cabinet car became a part of all the history of the flight.⁵ By the 11th an invitation was sent to General Joseph E. Johnston to come to Greensboro for a conference. General Beauregard's headquarters were there, and Mr. Davis believed some disposition of the Confederate forces other than those that had been the Army of Northern Virginia might be made to stay the Federal troops. Three days later a letter to his wife shows that while heartening his people Jefferson Davis had in reality little hope. His anxiety is for his wife and his children.

Greensboro, N. C., April 14, 1865.

Dear Winnie:

I will come to you if I can. Everything is dark. You should prepare for the worst by dividing your baggage so as to move in wagons. If you can go to Abbeville, it seems best as I now advise. If you can send everything there, do so. I have lingered on the road and labored to little purpose. My love to the children and Maggie.

God bless, guide and preserve you, ever prays

Your most affectionate

BANNY.

P.S. I sent you a telegram, but fear it was stopped on the road. General Bonham bears this. His horse is at the door, he awaits me to write this. Again and ever yours.⁶

What he did not write was that the people of Greensboro held him responsible for the now fast-failing cause. His foes were those of his own household. There was little courtesy shown their President. The outlook was indeed dark.

The meeting with Generals Johnston and Beauregard took place here. It was a military problem the President of the Confederacy put to them. He was unwilling to accept the surrender of Lee as the end of the war. Southern independence was, in his mind, not lost at Appomattox. The Army of Northern Virginia for some time past had been recruited from the Far South, and the men, many of them, had gone home. Supplies were ample throughout the Lower South. Yet through the long months from October to April the Army around Petersburg were on starvation rations. It was the old story of transportation.

The conference with General Johnston and General Beauregard took place in the house of John Taylor Wood, where the President was staying, in a small bedroom on the second

floor. Mallory, Benjamin, Reagan and Breckenridge found such places as they could in this small twelve-by-sixteen room with its bed, a few chairs and writing table. Trenholm was too ill to be present, but finance was no longer a vital subject.

When General Johnston and General Beauregard came, the President, with the ease that was habitual with him, made the moment a simple one. He was an extremely good mimic. He talked of subjects quite remote and there were anecdotes and pleasantry. He had made this routine a practice in all the Cabinet meetings and this one was to be no exception. It was all part of Southern living. Any occasion must be agreeable. But it was Johnston's hour. When the President said, "I think we can whip the enemy yet if our people will turn out," it met with no response. It was a tense moment—Davis, folding and unfolding a small piece of paper he had in his hands, his face immovable while Johnston told of his men's deserting since they had heard of Lee's surrender. Secretary Mallory recalled all these details.⁷ The quiet of the President—now controlling his mind and face with his will, and listening to the end. Johnston won over the group to believe that the time had come to begin discussion with Sherman. Further resistance, in his opinion, seemed futile, and Beauregard concurred. The word "surrender" had been used by some of the Cabinet. Worn and beaten by his own people, Davis' opinion of getting a sufficient force together in the South for further resistance went unheeded in the quiet of this small room. The President was doubtful if the Federal forces would treat with them. Johnston thought negotiations could be opened with Sherman, and Davis dictated the letter. But the terms as arranged between Johnston and Sherman were not approved by the United States Government. The only terms could

be those that were made with Lee. Johnston later told Sherman he thought further fighting would have been "murder."

Soon a slipping away further to the South was begun, and Charlotte became the place for the symbol of a Government. Here the people were friendly. The length of the stay was problematical. Mrs. Davis, who had established herself there some days earlier, was gone when her husband and his Cabinet arrived. With rumors of a raid, she had thought it wiser to move on to Chester. Later, she wrote, perhaps she would go on to Washington, Georgia, or Abbeville, South Carolina. A telegram handed to Davis just as he was dismounting gave him the information that Lincoln had been assassinated. "I certainly have no special regard for Mr. Lincoln," was his comment, "but there are a great many men of whose end I would much rather have heard than his."⁸ Some near-by troopers cheered when this news was read to them.⁹

From Charlotte he writes Mrs. Davis of how the plan to reorganize the forces in the South has failed. "The dispersion of Lee's army and the surrender of the remnant which remained with him destroyed the hopes I entertained when we parted. Had that Army held together I am now confident we could have successfully executed the plan which I sketched to you and would have been to-day on the high road to independence." It was the same unquenchable optimism. "Even after that disaster," he continues, "if the men who 'straggled' had held together—say thirty or forty thousand in number—had come back with their arms and with a disposition to fight, we might have repaired the damage; but all was sadly the reverse of that. They threw away their arms and were uncontrollably resolved to go home. . . . Panic has seized the country." He plans for her and

the children that they may not be in absolute want. For himself he writes, "It may be that our enemy will prefer to banish me." He holds a half hope—a familiar one with him—that with a devoted band of cavalry—some two thousand had been assembled at Charlotte—he might in time reach the trans-Mississippi country. He had become again the soldier. He speaks of Mexico. There he would "have the world from which to choose a location." "Farewell, my dear, there may be better things in store for us than are now in view, but my love is all I have to offer, and that has the value of a thing long possessed and sure not to be lost. Once more, and, with God's favor, for a short time only, farewell."

The time had now come to leave Charlotte. Disbanding and seeking flight are not the ways of a soldier. Perhaps there was the hidden hope that even at this late time, and with the small escort forces at his command, Davis would be equal to meeting the enemy, reckoned to be near. The intent back of this was the illusive belief that took shape in that ghost-like army to be miraculously brought together across the Mississippi. The lay members of his party, his Cabinet, thought that flight was the only thing for him, that the President should secure his personal safety. They were seemingly perplexed about their own course of action. The Secretary of the Navy, Mallory, found he must attend to the needs of his family. He had previously told his President that he did not intend to leave the country. He further was not in sympathy with the vague trans-Mississippi plans of his Chief. He thought any plan for prolonging the war wrong. When the party reached Washington he handed in his resignation. The Secretary of War, Breckenridge, had remained with some of the cavalry at the Savannah River.

General Breckenridge's intention was, however, to follow Mr. Davis. But it so happened he never saw him again. When he heard that his President had been captured he sought the Florida coast in company with John Taylor Wood, who at the moment of Mr. Davis' capture made a quiet escape in the excitement of getting the Great Prisoner. Later both succeeded in reaching the West Indies in an open boat.

Mr. Benjamin, worn with arduous duties as Secretary of State, found horseback riding difficult. He determined to change his route and his conveyance. He left his President at a halt for breakfast with some smiling intent of meeting him in that hoped-for trans-Mississippi adventure. As a matter of fact, they met again in England some ten years later, where Benjamin's legal aptitude and Oriental splendor had taken the fancy of the benchers of the Inns of Court.

The stay at Washington, Georgia, was not long. There was rumor of the pursuing Federal troops. But what was worse to this harassed political soldier was that Johnston had surrendered to Sherman. He roused himself even at this to keep a hope of assembling some force west of the Mississippi. It was part of the dogged will of the man that his enemies among his own people called obstinacy. So it went on. From Washington the way for them lay to the South to reach, if possible, points beyond Federal occupation. Then word was brought of a band of marauders, the off-scourings of both armies. Davis altered his plan. He would go East and try to overtake his family, who, with his secretary and an escort, were making their way to the Florida coast.

In the moonlit country through a long night, Davis rode with his staff. Shadows came over the road, and they proved



From a drawing by the special artist of the Illustrated London News, July, 1, 1865.

MR. DAVIS AND HIS CABINET CROSSING THE GEORGIA RIDGES

to be soldiers of an Alabama regiment homeward bound. They had passed an encampment of wagons and there were women and children, they said. A short distance on the President heard a familiar voice. It was his secretary, Burton N. Harrison, who with other men were on post around the camp. They had thought when the moon had gone down the sky, the marauders would attack the party.

Some days before Mrs. Davis had written her husband, "Leave your escort and take another route often. Alabama is full of cavalry, fresh and earnest in pursuit." Now at last they were together, and, with the coming dawn, they rode on, rode for several days, out of reach, so Davis thought, of the marauding band. He then would feel it safe to leave his family. He was not beaten. He would go on with the vague plan of assembling a force. Such a place near Irwinsville, he believed, had been found. He delayed a night, however, because one of his staff had picked up the rumor that the marauders would attack then. His pistols were ready in their holsters. His horse was kept saddled. As a soldier he was ready for an emergency. Then, fully dressed, he lay down to rest.

At dawn, Jim Jones, the negro coachman who had come with Mrs. Davis from Richmond, roused Davis to tell him there was firing near the encampment. Davis' soldier eye saw cavalry, not marauders. Colonel Prichard and his 4th Michigan Cavalry had found the encampment, through a negro whom they had met on the road giving them the information. Turning back to his wife's tent to tell her that the marauders were cavalry surrounding the camp, he saw as well that he could not reach his horse and holsters for the troopers were coming down that road. It was still dark in the tent, and the "raglan" he picked up and put over

his shoulders was his wife's, and not his own, so very like it. As he went out again she threw a shawl over his head. A trooper halted him and demanded his surrender. Davis promptly dropped the raglan and the shawl and gave, he says, "a defiant answer." One of the 4th Michigan Cavalry recalled the answer as being, "If there is a man among you, shoot me." The trooper raised his carbine to fire, and Mrs. Davis ran and threw her arms about her husband. His chance of escape had gone.

The morning was chilly and there was a fire on the other side of the tent. Davis went there. Firing had begun on the other side of the encampment and the 4th Michigan Cavalry quickly turned and fired. It was a Wisconsin regiment of cavalry which had been pursuing the President of the Confederacy, and had come by another road. Waste of life had been going on now a long time. So this accidental firing upon their own men was just a little more.

A trunk of Mrs. Davis' was opened, though it cost a Federal trooper his hand, for in opening it his carbine went off. But a hoop skirt was taken out of the trunk. A raglan, a shawl, a hoop skirt. War hysteria provided the rest, and journals, cartoons, the whole world was to hear that Jefferson Davis sought to make his escape in a woman's clothes. One way the fiction lived was because P. T. Barnum gave Broadway a chance to see night after night a representation of the capture with the woman's clothes. It seemed to the South that this was very characteristic of the North. It was very characteristic of a showman. Horace Greeley was a showman too. But it was a better type of showmanship, although going bond for the bail of Jefferson Davis cost him some social recognition.³⁰ It was all part of the ugly murk that rises from the ashes of war.

Soon a long journey was begun. There was a stop at Macon where the ranking Federal officer in that part of the South received the prisoner. They had been at West Point together, this General Wilson and Davis. It was at Macon Davis learned that he was charged with being in a conspiracy to assassinate President Lincoln. He told General Wilson there was one man in the United States that knew the proclamation to be false, and that was the person, Andrew Johnson, who signed it, for "he at least knew," said Mr. Davis, "that I preferred Lincoln to himself." What Andrew Johnson came to know was that he had put his signature to a State paper supplied by Judge Advocate General Holt, and that the charge was false, based, as it was, on perjured testimony.

The end of the journey was to be Fortress Monroe. But the way lay through Augusta, and in Augusta, Woodrow Wilson, a boy of eight, saw this grim sight of the President of the Confederacy being led a captive under a Federal guard. "And yet—one can find a likeness."

At Fortress Monroe for two long years Mr. Davis was a State prisoner. There were some ugly things in connection with it. He was shackled, but happily not for long. Later he was moved from the casement of the Fortress to Carroll Hall, a building that at one time had been used as Officers' Quarters. His physician, Dr. Craven, thought him a singularly cultivated and interesting man. He found him to have an unusual scientific knowledge of his section of the country. The days he had spent in hunting, in fishing, he had used his mind and his eye. His recreation had seemingly been turned to scientific account.¹¹ They talked of many things, these two men, and once it was of President Johnson. "He was," Mr. Davis said, "indifferent to money

and careless of praise or censure when satisfied of the necessity of any line of action. But for his decided attitude against secession, he would probably have been given the place of Stephens on the Presidential ticket of the Confederacy."

Richmond hailed him the day of his release on bail in May, 1867, hailed him as she had not always done during the years the city had been the seat of the Confederate Government. The correspondent of the Boston *Advertiser* who witnessed it thought the ovation given Davis was such as Boston "never gave anybody or any cause."¹² Nineteen months later his release came with the dismissal of the indictment by the Circuit Court at Richmond, which was dropped as well from the docket of the Supreme Court of the United States. The General Amnesty of Christmas Day, 1868, covering all those who had participated in the war, made possible the dismissal. It was one of many entanglements of Reconstruction politics. The Radicals of Congress through their influence had held off the release as long as their evil planning would work.¹³

Mr. Davis once said that justice was an eminent feature of Andrew Johnson's character.¹⁴

HE had set "so rich a main on the nice hazard of one doubtful hour," and lost. They had called him one of the Hot-spurs of the South. They had called him many things through the four long years. Now the quiet of time was easing his days. It was not the roses of Brierfield, nor its garden, but a garden of a different beauty which was all about him. The chime of the blue waters of the Gulf of Mexico hummed along the sandy beach in front of his house. Gray moss swayed from the live oaks that, with the pines and cypresses, made a forest over the many acres that surrounded Beauvoir. There was the orange grove too. He felt it a personal loss when a rare frost winter-killed the young trees. Here at Beauvoir he found peace of a kind. The place was to mean home to him—his last.

Since that May day in 1867 when he had been released from prison at Fortress Monroe he had moved from place to place, following a mood or a reason. The slow paces of adjustment to ordinary living measured the strength of the man imprisoned for two years. It was on an April day two years before that he had left Richmond, and this May day of his release brought him back again for a few hours. "I feel like an unhappy ghost visiting this much-beloved city,"¹ he said. The family then went to Canada where his children were in school and where too he found many other Confederates who had gone there either during or directly after the war. His old Commissioner Mr. Mason was at Toronto. He seemingly did not share his fellow Commissioner Mr.

Slidell's fondness for the French Capital. The Davis family finally settled in Lenoxville, Quebec, to take advantage of the excellent school connected with Bishop's College for the boy Jefferson, and the long slow days of readjustment went on.

Near by outside the village were friends whose place "Rock Grove" became a sort of haven for Mr. Davis, who was acutely sensitive to sound since his release. Here he spent much of his time until it was found that the cold of the Canadian winter was too hard upon him, and the following spring the family were in England. Gladstone's doubtful oratory on the Tyne would have made Davis an interesting figure in England if nothing else, but he had many friends there, people who had never felt the neutrality for America the English Government had proclaimed, but had been wholly sympathizers with the South, and he was at home at once. He was received in the Houses of Parliament where for so long he hoped would be heard the magic word, recognition, which would have taken on a full meaning for the Confederacy. And once there had been a time when he was cheered by the students at Oxford.

The various enterprises Mr. Davis had undertaken to restore his lost fortunes had met with no success. The presidency of an insurance company in Memphis brought its own defeat. The city welcomed their ex-President. The people offered him a house, but fine pride made him decline. He must be independent. But in time the company failed. Yellow fever made the risks too high. Mr. Davis said it was a satisfaction to him that his own personal loss was so large. Yet his head was unbowed. Personal sorrow alone could do that, and that came in the death of his brother Joseph and one of his own sons—William.

Always with Mr. Davis the dream of empire lay near the surface of his thoughts. Now it was that the glory that was New Orleans should be hers again, and other cities of the Lower South. Trade communications should be developed between the South American States and the old city whose port was the gateway to the Seven Seas. A society was formed, The Mississippi Valley Society, made up of a Southern and an English company, whose ships were to have the carrying trade and make exchange for manufactured articles with raw materials in foreign ports. This plan too failed. Capital was not easily found, and when it was, sought a quick return. Trade routes develop slowly. The accustomed ways on the seas held, for the industries at the North and in New England needed the raw materials for manufacture,² and the ships continued to sail the Western Ocean to the Northern ports. Capital was there, too. So that dream faded away. The affairs of the Society were settled, and once again Mr. Davis sought quiet and peace among his roses.

Brierfield was in litigation. After his brother Joseph's death both the plantations, "The Hurricane" and "Brierfield," were waiting adjudication, burdened with debt. The Federals too had made the destruction pretty complete. Ultimately some of "Brierfield" was restored to Mr. Davis, and he hoped in time it would again produce an income. While waiting for that he sought some place of quiet where he could undertake the work of writing a history of the Confederacy. His choice was Beauvoir—on the Gulf about half way between New Orleans and Mobile. He rented from a Mrs. Sarah A. Dorsey, a schoolmate and friend of his wife's, a small cottage near the main house. Here he established himself with his books and papers, and made arrangements for the coming of his family. The task he had undertaken

was a heavy one, and he was three years in completing it. During this time the scourge of the South came upon them. Jefferson, Jr., the only surviving son, died of yellow fever, as did Mrs. Dorsey, the gracious owner of the main house. The latter with fine delicacy had made Mr. Davis her executor. At her death he was to find that Beauvoir House, which she "had sold" to him on pride-permitting terms, had been left to him, and in the event of his refusing it, it was to revert to his daughter Winnie, then a minor. So it was that Beauvoir House became his last home, as it is now that of surviving Confederate soldiers.

The house was ample, built high from the ground with spacious verandas running about it reached by broad steps. The wide hall through the center of the house caught such breezes as the waters of the Gulf gave off and made a cool living room for the summer months. The outbuildings ran off from the rear, and on either side of the main house were two small cottages. The tropical sun urged the garden and the grounds to a growth and beauty of their own.

Here the work upon the book went on from 1878 to 1881. The mere physical effort of writing was irksome to Davis. It had always been so, and Mrs. Davis would take his dictation. Judge Tenney had been sent by his publishers to give such aid as he might require and his old friend, Major W. T. Walthall, who was to leave some interesting reminiscences, worked with him. In 1881 *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government* was published. Its two large volumes contained much important material, and as a statement of the doctrine of secession in all its bearings it will remain, perhaps, one of the best. But the work is disappointing from many angles. It is not a history of the Confederate Government. It is Jefferson Davis's apologia. It was said of Gib-

bon's autobiography that he did not seem to know the difference between himself and the Roman Empire. So it was with Davis. "He had too feminine a jealousy of any rivalry in authority," and the history of the Confederacy became himself. He had so long been the Saint Sebastian of the struggle; the arrows of foe and friend alike had pierced him very deeply. He took the arrows out, but he showed his own wounds. There is too a heavy over-balance of military matters. It was a soldier writing the book. Both as officer and administrator, soldiering had been a major interest of his life.

The book did not meet with success. It was expensive, and the South then, in 1881, was still too near the point that Sidney Lanier wrote of—"pretty much the whole of life had been merely not dying," for the buying of books to be a general practice. Friends wrote to him that the book was not having sales. "I hear little of it here," his friend Wright wrote him from Chicago,³ who feared the book would not prove profitable to him. In time there was controversy with his publishers. They were not pushing the book enough. General Grant's memoirs had become the best seller of the moment—running up past two hundred thousand copies. The sensitive author, whose book showed a sale of but a few thousand copies in two years' time, thought it could be explained only by some lack on the part of his publishers. The complaint, however, had no basis in fact.⁴ A General's record of his successful campaigns inevitably was more engrossing than a personal explanation of a lost cause, whatever the quality of the writing as literature.

He told a young journalist who came to see him that his purpose in writing the book had been to give young students of politics a chance to get their history from original sources.

He did not seem to care to talk about the book and declared himself indifferent to critics—a defense reaction from his vanity, perhaps. His interviewer, who happened to be young Walter Hines Page, had found in his journeyings through the South that the tide of interest in the old secession question had gone out. It had ceased to be a question. The slowly gathering efforts for the advancing South had changed the thought from the old order. Mr. Davis and what he wrote would claim respectful attention. But the book the South wanted to read was one whose pages were made day by day in their own living. Young Page's impression of the courtly gentleman who rose to meet him in the piazza at Beauvoir when he went to see him was of a man unbent by age, "elegant" in manner, and his conversation of rare interest. He felt the accustomed spell of the voice, which he says "had much to do with his [Davis'] recognition and swift advancement in political life."⁵ But he was a sad solitary, living by the waters of this nearly land-locked sea—a man without a country. And the young journalist with the instinct of his craft realized that the man before him could not be related to any present subject in the public mind. He was the symbol of an idea that was gone.

Just a year before he died he made a speech at Mississippi City. It was his message to the younger generation:

Mr. Chairman and Fellow Citizens:

Ah, pardon me, the laws of the United States no longer permit me to designate you as fellow citizens, but I am thankful I may address you as my friends. I feel no regret that I stand before you this afternoon a man without a country, for my ambition lies buried in the grave of the Confederacy.

There has been consigned not only my ambition, but the

dogmas on which that government was based. The faces I see before me are those of young men: had I not known this I would not have appeared before you. Men in whose hands the destinies of our Southland lie: for love of her I break my silence to speak to you a few words of respectful admonition. The past is dead, let it bury its dead, its hopes, its aspirations; before you lies the future—a future full of golden promise; a future of expanding national glory, before which all the world shall stand amazed. Let me beseech you to lay aside all rancor, all bitter, sectional feeling and to make your places in the ranks of those who will bring about ‘a consummation devoutly to be wished’—a reunited country.”⁶

Beauvoir was soon to be a place of pilgrimage. Many came through regard for the man; many with a curious interest; and still many others because with the passage of time Davis became more and more the symbol of the idea for which the South had given its life. To those who had not seen him since the Richmond days he would seem changed. The full beard he now wore lengthened the clear-cut face, and concealed the “chin like Calhoun’s.” But the visitors found the same courtliness, the same “almost unrivaled eloquence of conversation” that brought back the Confederate President.⁷ The bitter personal resentment toward him because of military preferments, which was used as the reason for the failure of the cause, lessened with the years. They thought of him now only as the President of the Confederacy. Presently the different cities in the South wanted to see and hear him speak once again, and in 1886, after living in retirement some twenty years, he went among his people to be heartened with their cheers.

He had accepted an invitation to lay the cornerstone of a monument to the Confederate dead in the capitol grounds of Montgomery. It was his first public appearance. Again, as

in 1861, his carriage was drawn by four white horses, each led by a negro in livery. He stood upon the steps of the portico of the Capitol, where twenty-five years before he had taken his oath of office as President of the Confederacy. Before him were his Confederate veterans and their families. Above him this time the Stars and Stripes whipped out in the wind. He was old and feeble now, and leaned upon a cane, but he told his people he felt he had come home again, had come to the land "where liberty dies not and heroic sentiments live forever." And the newspapers the following day carried the caption "True to His Two Flags. Noble Sentiments of Dixie's Heroic Ex-President."⁸ The journey continued to Atlanta, and all along the route as stops were made the old leader was cheered and cheered. At Atlanta, where he made the address at the unveiling of the statue of Benjamin H. Hill, there was the same enthusiastic greeting, the same immense crowds to hail their former chief. But it was wearisome business, and the strain of it all began to tell on Mr. Davis. He did, however, go on to Savannah, to attend the celebration of the Centennial of the Chatham Artillery and make an address. This was the zenith of his acclaim. The car in which he came from Atlanta was decorated with red, white and blue, and on either side the word "Davis" in immortelles, and between festoons the inscriptions "Buena Vista" and "He Was Manacled for Us." Oddly enough, these two inscriptions proclaimed what had "fired the Southern heart" for him. A military record and a martyrdom. The South could respond to both of these. The visit to Savannah lasted four days. Wherever Mr. Davis appeared the people crowded about him to shake his hand, to try to catch a word with him. The school children strewed with roses the lane through which he walked. The house where

he stayed in Taylor Street facing the Square, was constantly surrounded by people begging for a sight of him. He would come out occasionally on the iron balconies which ran across the front of the house and make a speech. His hostess still remembers what gracious guests he and his daughter Winnie were. His only exaction was that an eggnog be served him before breakfast. He declined all invitations but one. He accepted Doctor J. J. Waring's invitation to be present at the unveiling of the tablets at the Greene Monument placed there by the Georgia Historical Society and the City Council. There was, it will be remembered, the tradition that his mother was a niece of General Greene.

The fatigue of the four days proved too great and it was decided that Mr. Davis should go directly to New Orleans and not visit the other cities which had hoped for a visit. When he left Savannah this time it was by train, acclaimed by his people. Twenty-five years before he had been taken to a boat moored to the old quay, reached by curving walls and iron stairways, and under guard of Federal soldiers, to begin the voyage to Fortress Monroe. His Southland now had given all honors—which could not be misconstrued. "They were open and sincere," one paper said in commenting upon them, and "if they make the remaining years of his life happier then they have not been in vain." He was soon back in Beauvoir, occupied with little concerns, spending many hours in his library or going on with his correspondence, which he always dictated to Mrs. Davis, waiting really for the peace at the last.

He was often approached for his opinions on public matters. Frequently he felt indifferent alike to the question or to making a reply. But after he had been persuaded once

more to go among his people and had been cheered by his reception, he would answer the queries put to him.

He approved the idea of H. W. Pope for a court of arbitration to secure equally the confidence of labor and capital, and he believed that it "should be based on something like the coöperative principle of industrial partnership in which the wages of employees should be measured by the profits of the corporation."⁹

On prohibition his views were even more far seeing. He applied to it the principle he had stated in connection with the Compromise Measure in 1850—that no act of Congress could be enforced in any State if public opinion was against it. Texas, at the time, was presenting a constitutional amendment, to be submitted to popular vote, prohibiting the manufacture or sale of any intoxicating liquors, including wine, ale and beer. He consented to write a letter for publication on the subject, breaking a long silence because of his belief that a question of American policy was involved. It was at the urgent request of his friend, Governor F. R. Lubbock. As a student of Democracy, he was of the opinion that "the world is governed too much." He then went on:

"When our fathers achieved their independence, the cornerstone of the governments they constructed was individual liberty, and the social organizations they established were not for the surrender, but for the protection of natural rights. For this, governments were established deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. . . . There was then a two-fold purpose in Government: protection and prevention against trespass by the strong upon the weak, the many on the few.

"The world had long suffered from the oppressions of government under the pretext of ruling by Divine right, and

excusing the invasion into private and domestic affairs on the plea of paternal care for the morals and good order of the people.

"Our sires rejected all such pretensions, their system being: Government by the people, for the people, and resting on the basis of natural inalienable rights."

Mr. Davis, in 1886, had momentarily returned to his earlier manner in theory of government. He then says he will answer the query concerning the prohibition amendment.

"That the intemperate use of intoxicating liquors is an evil, few, if any, will deny. That it is the root of many social disorders is conceded, but then the question arises, what is the appropriate remedy and what the present necessity? To destroy individual liberty and moral responsibility would be to eradicate one evil by the substitution of another, which it is submitted would be more fatal than that for which it was offered as a remedy. The abuse, and not the use, of stimulants, it must be confessed, is the evil to be remembered. Then it clearly follows that action should clearly be directed against the abuse rather than the use. If drunkenness be the cause of disorder and crime, why not pronounce drunkenness itself to be a crime, and attach to it proper and adequate penalties? If it be objected that the penalties could not be enforced, that is an admission that popular opinion would be opposed to the law." Here is the notion reminiscent of the 1850 speech. He then brings his argument in the inquiry to "the present necessity." "I might appeal to men not as old as myself to sustain the assertion that the convivial use of intoxicants and the occurrence of drunkenness had become less frequent within the last twenty-five years than it was before. The refining influences of education and Christianity may be credited with this result. Why not allow these

blessed handmaidens of virtue and morality to continue unembarrassed in their civilizing work. . . . You have already provision for local prohibition." Mr. Davis reverts to the States' Rights theory. "If it has proven the wooden horse," he continues, "in which a disguised enemy to State sovereignty as the guardian of individual liberty was introduced, then let it be a warning that the progressive march would probably be from village to State, and from State to United States."¹⁰

This letter, it was thought, helped to defeat the amendment at the polls. An immediate effect of its publication was for a bishop of the Methodist Church South to criticize Mr. Davis. It appears that the bishop did so more than once for Mr. Davis addresses an open letter to him. He refers to the bishop's "persistence in unjustified assailment," and then tells of his own grief that "a dignitary of the Methodist Church South should have left the pulpit and the Bible to mount the political rostrum and plead the higher law of prohibition—the substitution of force for free will, moral responsibility, and the brotherly love. . . . In this I see the forbidden union of Church and State." He praises the work done by the Methodist Church South, its "fidelity to principle despite the pressure of wealth and power," and he recalls the prophetic vision of Bishop Marvin: "Will it be fulfilled by introducing politics into the Church he so nobly illustrated?" he asks. "Fanaticism looks through a reversed telescope, minimizing everything save its special object." He recalls too that at one time sumptuary laws embraced what should be worn and eaten.

If we begin the march of retrogression where will it stop? If, as already proposed, there should be Federal laws to enforce the prohibition policy, your recollection of war and

reconstruction days should enable you to anticipate the doings of an army of spies, informers, and deputy marshals making domiciliary visits to insure the observance of the law. The moral decay which would inevitably result from such a condition needs no portrayal. . . . There are surely better remedies for offence against the peace and good order of society than such a departure from our principles of constitutional liberty and community independence as would be Federal legislation to enforce a sumptuary law."

He concludes somewhat pointedly.

"The month [he writes] in which you made your address is reputed to have had an exceptionally large number of assassinations. The newspapers have many notices of burglaries, robberies, rape and infanticides. Divorces are shamefully frequent. . . . The colossal wealth of the few grows in geometrical proportions, while the toiling millions plod on their weary way. Are all these and other evils, crimes and misfortunes not enumerated, due to one cause, or is the one idea a universal absorbent?"¹¹

The Methodist Bishop continued the attack, and numbers of his clergy did as well, and they even made him "the theme of sermons." The subject was one of major interest at that time.

It was in this wise that at his quiet home by the tideless sea of the Gulf this aged man's single attempt to enunciate an American principle was received by Christian leaders. Mr. Davis was called many things; a doctrinaire, scholar, the ugly word traitor, statesman. It was too early to call him prophet.

Mr. Davis might very well have included in his letter to Governor Lubbock what his interpretation was of an amendment, its meaning and the significance of what it could accomplish. He stated it very explicitly in his *Rise and Fall*.

"I submit," he says, "that the word 'amendment' necessarily implies an improvement upon something which is possessed, and can have no proper application to that which did not previously exist."¹²

It was late autumn, in November, 1889, and he went to Brierfield on one of his visits in the interest of his affairs. The Mississippi, twice rising to the flood, had left its telling waste on the Brierfield lands and put new burdens on the debts already attached to the plantation. It was an old and broken man who stood now for the last time among the ruins and the roses. A single crumbling chimney was all that was left. The tangled desolation lay about him everywhere. The river alone was unchanged; still went on "unvexed to the sea." The blue and white herons rose from the marshes or busied themselves in the lush swamp growth. The hot tropical sun was still helping the yield of the land.

But he was already too ill to look after the affairs that had brought him there. He had taken a chill on the boat, and his last illness had its beginning. He made the effort to get back to Beauvoir, but on reaching New Orleans it was thought unwise to allow him to go further, and he was taken to the house of his old friend Mr. J. U. Payne. Mrs. Davis, who had been sent for to come to Brierfield, met her husband while on his way down the Mississippi, and so was with him when they reached New Orleans.

The room they took him to was at the corner of the house in the rear and gave on the gardens where the camellia bushes bloomed and the clusters of oranges on the trees were golden in the sun. Into the room itself the Southern sun poured throughout the day. Here, in such quiet and in the old city which some forty years before had hailed him as a military hero after Buena Vista, he died, on December 6, 1889.

The Governors of nine States were his pallbearers. The Grand Army of the Republic took part in the ceremonies, and the city made solemn tribute to their dead leader. They laid him in a tomb in the old Metairie Cemetery. But that was temporary. Richmond, which had been the heart of the Confederacy, claimed him, and some four years later he was buried on a hillside in Hollywood Cemetery, in sight of the other river with which his life had been linked, the James. The roses now covered Jefferson Davis.

THE man who left his roses at the summons of a group of men determined upon political revolution came to his end as part of a broken hope—part, in fact, of the devastation that lay across the Southland. The war hysteria of both South and North decreed that the blame should be largely fastened upon him. In the one case he was the symbol of an idea that had failed and with its failure there had been laid waste a civilization. In the other, he was the leader who, to serve his own ambition and because of his interest in slavery, cared little if the republic whose flag he had sworn to defend were wrecked.

The same thing would have been said of any one who had been in his place.

He was a soldier by taste and a political leader by accident. But his way of living took him into politics as naturally as his lands took him into cotton planting.

The unit of the plantation was in miniature the Southerner's view of his State. By the nature of things it was self-contained. And the end and purpose of living was to bring the plantation to its own perfection. For the purpose of the political unit, the county mattered, a notion taken over from England, and the logical step from the county to the State, since sovereignty was essential, was an easy and lasting one.

An organized group developed on the right of secession could scarcely be expected to have felt itself tightly bound to a Confederacy, which in other days in order to hold together had had to devise a new arrangement and develop "a more

perfect union." But that it, the Southern Confederacy, barely survived two years, in little more than in name, must have indicated to some of the thoughtful minds the handwriting on the wall. The political growth that passed so quickly from the unit of the plantation to that of the county, and from there to the State, was not over-zealous for a further grouping under the title of Confederacy. The Confederacy failed in large measure because the habit of thought which made the sovereignty of a State supreme made any group of States a yielding of supremacy, and that was unacceptable to the Southern mind. South Carolina would doubtless have been glad to have remained outside the Confederacy and other States would as easily have pursued the same course. It took the common purpose of a war to bring and keep the seceding States together, and not the least part of Mr. Davis' superhuman task was to foster the idea that the States were allies, creating a force to be under a unified command—the Confederate Army.

That the notion of the State so completely held the minds of the people is the more remarkable when boundaries were vague, almost invisible borders, and frontiers but the lines of will and hopes. It is possible to believe that had there been no Civil War and the dream of empire in the Southern mind come true, there would have been a war between the *Southern* States, so taut was the sense of individual rights when once the political unit was accepted. When the time came that the sharp cleavage divided the Confederacy, Davis and his management of its affairs were made the ostensible explanation. It was in reality more the States' insistence of their own claim, but the way to show it was to turn the elections against the Administration.

The idea of an independent nation did not exist so much

in the mind of the Southern voter as it did in that of the Southern planters, and the independent nation could exist only on the basis that its wealth was maintained through slavery.

No War President could escape criticism. None has. Lincoln was under as sharp attack as Davis, and the politicians in one half of the country plied their selfish trade as well as in the other. In the South success could only be hoped for if complete support were given to the President and the Government. The States seceded in principle by failing to uphold their President and in doing it they lost their Cause, and blamed their leader.

As an individualist, any yielding of supremacy was unpalatable to a man of Davis' type, but he was single-minded in his loyalty and devotion to his cause. His critics in the South say he was not shrewd enough nor conciliatory enough to have played the politician as head of the Confederacy. He did lack that experience of men as they meet and counter one another in the world's business and an insight into their peculiar powers for special leaderships. One critic finds him on the whole a wise ruler but that he lost the confidence of the Southern people because his conception of the practice of politics was so inadequate. They thought him too much the scholar. Pollard, the editor of the Richmond *Examiner* through the war, who could always find fault with him, said "his scholarship smelt of the closet." He had bookish tastes, but he was not a scholar in the scholastic sense. He took his Scott and the romance of the Waverly Novels in the same stride he did his hunting and his dogs and the task of politics. It was all part of the scholar-planter's life. Scott was to the South what Gilbert White's *Selborne* was to the English countryside. Davis read and liked his Tennyson

but not to the point of always carrying a copy of the poems around with him as did his Secretary of State. And the poems of Tennyson's great friend, Arthur Hugh Clough, were often read.

"Where lies the land to which the ship would go?
Far, far ahead is all her seamen know."

And Burns he knew so well that he had but to be given a line to go on to the end. Byron and Moore he read because they pleased him, but the intellectuals did not interest him. He admitted finding Milton a bore and Browning appealed to him not at all. He frequently quoted his Virgil, and in the earlier part of his life he read Spanish literature because it gave him pleasure. Those eight years at Brierfield, passed in quiet study of the history of political thought, had equipped him with a knowledge of results, but seem not to have given him so clear an understanding of how they had been reached. As a matter of fact he had not the scholar's approach to a subject, but he had the habit of reflection gained in those years of a planter's life, and his Scotch-Irish tenacity to an idea made for continuity in his thinking. He never retracted from the position of the rights of secession, nor would he accept the pardon which by the General Amnesty issued by President Johnson was held to include him.

"As for me—I speak only for myself—our cause was so just, so sacred, that had I known all that is come to pass, had I known what was to be inflicted upon me, all that my country was to suffer, all that our posterity was to endure, I would do it all over again."² He would admit no intellectual defeat, so he found no defects in his endeavors. 324

Affairs of State were his occupation, but only in a restricted

sense was he a statesman. Like the men of his time he dreamed of empire to offset the inroads on the control of the Government the rapid growth of the industrial North had made. And he adjusted his political theory to meet that situation.

The defining of statesmanship is a sport of the Anglo-Saxon who shapes it generally to conform to his notion of political theory. The man who seems best to have achieved for his government those actions that exhibit the theory in successful operation wins the title. Mr. Davis found his theory could not be put into successful operation. But his was not alone the blame; he shared that with others. It was the recognition of that on the part of the South that in the last years of his life made his people pay the tribute many had so long denied him.

When given the Presidency he had a divided allegiance. He was at heart the soldier, and his Government, of which he was the head, had at once to deal with a soldier's business. He threw his strength in that direction and left the affairs of State more to the ingenuities of Mr. Benjamin's active brain.

He was not a great executive. He could not delegate power, but he could heed the representations of the man who best understood that his vanity must be fed. The President's messages to his Congress were often the handiwork of this skilled workman,³ so Benjamin took some pains to record. Had Davis been in uniform he would have better pleased his people as well as himself, but the man of destiny as he appeared to the men at Montgomery in 1861 could best serve them in civilian dress.

That he over-directed the military end of his Government was contemporary opinion. His military appointments and

removals met with approval or condemnation as is inevitably the case. After the manner of all war-time executives he was praised and blamed. The war was but a few months old when in advancing Lee as full General over Joseph E. Johnston he laid the foundation for a lasting enmity between Johnston and himself. Generals Beauregard, Stonewall Jackson and others all sooner or later met with the autocratic displeasure. It was the opinion of one British Army officer that the most serious disasters that the Confederate Army suffered were due in the main because officers had been given their command rank for reasons other than their actual qualifications.⁴ This same officer points out that the peculiar opportunity Mr. Davis had, as Secretary of War of the United States, to know the abilities of many of the officers who came into the Confederate service had enabled him to put into the higher commands the most experienced men.⁵ When he ignored the South's demand for the appointment of distinguished civilians to high commands, he made himself disliked in the exact ratio of his failure to do their bidding. He had great regard for the West Point training, and he sought to utilize it at every opportunity. It was usual to accuse him of favoritism among his own friends in giving preferment to the men of his own class at the Military Academy. In reality he was drawing on material of which he knew something. From the first he had said if war came it would be a long one. It was the professional soldier speaking. His two-fold leadership as head of a Government and Commander-in-Chief worked for weakness in results. When he paid off political debts, a poor commander was not unlikely. When he acted in his capacity as military head he was using the knowledge of an expert. His weakness lay when he "took leave to act as if he understood much better

than those did who were in actual command what should be done in the field."

Davis kept his relations agreeable with his official family with a fair degree of success. There were only the average number of changes. The able Toombs never undertook to come again into official relation with Davis after his brief service as Secretary of State. He declined the War portfolio: "I would not be Mr. Davis' Chief Clerk. His Secretary of War can never be anything else." His Vice-President never agreed with him either in a policy or in its execution, but kept up Cabinet courtesy. Stephens was away from Richmond for two years, so out of sympathy was he with his President. His greatest offense was that he talked of peace without victory. When Davis asked him to come back to Richmond in the late autumn of 1864, he did so.⁶

Davis was neither resourceful nor foresighted in his capacity of Commander-in-Chief of his army. He was unequal to dealing in large figures for the needs that the magnitude of the task demanded. He was confident that could he have taken the field himself the army would have been invincible. Such a mental attitude served him well through the long and difficult years when his sensitivity was often rudely wounded. He had always the recourse of the egoist, an immovable faith in his own decisions.

He was part of a system that called for autocracy in the ways of living, but when he carried the principle to deal with his own squirearchy thrown into a cataclysm where statesmanship of a high order was necessary, he had only the equipment of theory and personal magnetism. He caught the people whom his voice reached, but he held them only for the duration of its sound.

He had no power over these same people when they dif-

fered with him. His vanity admitted of no rebuke, and he recognized a mental equal only when their ideas coincided. He was a man of intellect, a student in affairs and a master of accomplishments. He was sensitive to the point of torture, as the thin lips sometimes betrayed. But they could be made to straighten into a firm line that indicated his unbending will. Only that could have carried him through the years of illness, when the acute nervous crises would hold him in exquisite pain and leave him physically unequal for the task of the moment. His courage was unquestioned, as was his personal integrity. "He heartened a whole people to hold steadfast to the end," but he seems never to have had wholly the heart of his people. Perhaps his greatest tragedy was that he never knew how to get it. He was a leader of a cause but not of men.

Notes

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⁴ Mississippi Valley Historical Association, Vol. IX, p. 153.

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² F. L. Olmsted, *A Journey in the Back Country*, p. 19.
³ Phillips, *Life and Labor*, p. 104.
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